# AN
# ENQUIRY
## INTO THE
## NATURE, DEFECTS, AND ABUSES
## OF THE
## BRITISH CONSTITUTION.

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[PRICE TWO SHILLINGS AND SIX-PENCE.]

AN

# ENQUIRY

INTO THE

NATURE, DEFECTS, AND ABUSES,

OF THE

# BRITISH CONSTITUTION,

WITH

# STRICTURES

ON THE

# PRESENT ADMINISTRATION.

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JOHN
JOHNSON

# DEDICATION.

THE ſtruggles that have been made for liberty in this country, form the nobleſt characteriſtic of Engliſhmen. Generous, brave, and patient under every peril and fatigue which was the price of freedom; every new ſtruggle has added a luſtre and magnanimity to the name. While all Europe has been enſlaved, ſuffering under the caprice or tyranny of their different deſpots, whoſe pride and reſtleſs ambition ſo often diſturbed the tranquility of their neighbours, the ſafety

of this country, and the privileges of Britons, have been preſerved by efforts not more glorious than they are aſtoniſhing. Natural proſperity has been the rewards of theſe exertions; and while the object of government was confined to general liberty and protection, the contributions of the people were over-paid in the bleſſings which were ſecured. But as every thing human requires alteration and amendment, ſo does our preſent conſtitution. A power, equally dangerous with the moſt flagrant deſpotiſm, has grown out of it; and has been permitted, by our wealth and credulity, to extend itſelf. It is time for the people to examine into the cauſe which produces it. Expences have been incurred in the moſt wanton manner, until the nation, ſaddled with a load which is inſupportable, feels the decaying ſinews totter under its weight. From the efforts of our anceſtors ſprang their former glory and happineſs; from our exertions muſt ariſe ours. The

people

people are eſſentially the ſame; our intereſt is inſeparable. We muſt fall and riſe as one man. To the people I dedicate this production. If it merit their approbation, or produce one good effect, I ſhall feel that ſatisfaction, which is the higheſt felicity a rational being can enjoy, that of being thought well of by his countrymen.

# INTRODUCTION.

PHILOSOPHY, in the courſe of the preſent century, has gained more ground, and brought to light more important truths, than the moſt celebrated paſt æras of reaſon and ſcience. In the removal of prejudicies, a glimmering ray of light has been expanded into the blaze of noon, which ſeems likely to illumine the whole earth. While Engliſhmen have enjoyed the bleſſings of freedom, their minds have been turned to the elucidation of every ſubject. Perhaps we owe our ſuperiority over the ancients to the fortunate invention

of printing, to the diſcovery of the polar attraction of the needle from the influence of the load-ſtone, and to the perfection, which the mathematics and aſtronomy have attained. While the revival of letters has added the collected wiſdom of ages paſt to the improvements of modern reſearches, the former invention has rapidly multiplied copies of the productions of genius and learning, which have been eaſily diſſeminated through every order of men. The latter improvements have not only led to the diſcovery of new worlds, but have facilitated the communication between different and remote nations; and commerce, with its blandiſhments, has given a poliſh to men tranſcendently pleaſing; manners more lovely than the frantic gallantry of chivalry. Reaſon, and the productive arts, have been the fruits of the one; wars and folly have marked the extravagance of the other.

While Engliſhmen were the only free people in exiſtence, we ſeem to have been contented with our conſtitution, though we often

often complained of the abuſes of government. It was natural in this elevation to contemplate, with graceful pride, our comparative felicity. While it ſecured to us a proſpect of permanent proſperity, we believed it the model of perfection; and that the abuſes were more the effect of degeneracy, weakneſs, or wickedneſs, in the adminiſtration of government, than that of the radical defects of the conſtitution.

Reflecting on theſe increaſing abuſes, it appeared to me, at firſt, that no talents could effect their immediate deſtruction. I clearly perceived that that popularity to which many look up, depended upon the temper of the times; and that is not unlike the habits of our bodies, either fervid, temperate, or phlegmatic, according to the nutriment it has taken, and the vigorous or degenerate ſtate of the conſtitution. Vigorous minds, on which the hope of many reſts, I alſo ſaw, were to be ameliorated only by the charms of true ſcience, and by a pure and juſt conception of the

the elementary principles of right and wrong. The degenerate, I likewiſe obſerved, was ſeldom capable of renovation. Seeing theſe things were ſo, I feared, leſt no amendment could be introduced into our preſent political ſyſtem, and that we ſhould be obliged to wait for riſing generations, and for a more manly turn of thinking, before we could expect the peccant or defective parts of the ſyſtem to be removed. But ruminating on the continued abuſes that have been practiſed, and the ruinous conſequences which muſt inevitably follow their extenſion, I was ſtimulated to examine more minutely into their nature; and encouraged by the many enlightened publications, which are daily produced upon the privileges and benefits of civil ſociety, I ventured to commit to paper my reflections upon the nature, defects, and abuſes of the Britiſh conſtitution, in that natural order in which they aroſe in my mind. If I have been able to communicate any thing worthy of notice to the world, I have the pleaſure to aſſure my countrymen, they are the ſentiments of a large proportion of

that

that claſs of men to which I belong; and I flatter myſelf, that I ſhall deſerve the thanks of all good men, at leaſt, for my zeal for general proſperity, and equal liberty.

AN

AN

# ENQUIRY,

## &c. &c.

PARLIAMENT conſiſts of King or firſt Magiſtrate, Lords, and Commons. The King has a negative voice in the legiſlature. He is intruſted with the executive power; and ſeveral other powers and privileges, which are called prerogatives, are annexed to this truſt. The houſes of parliament have their rights and privileges; ſome of which are common to both, others particular to each. They prepare, and they paſs bills; or they refuſe to paſs ſuch as are ſent to them. They addreſs, repreſent, adviſe, remonſtrate. The ſupreme judicature reſides in

the Lords. The Commons are the grand inqueſt of the nation; and to them it belongs, likewiſe, to judge of national expences, and to give or refuſe ſupplies accordingly. Thus, by the peculiar privileges belonging to the different branches of the legiſlature, the theory of our conſtitution promiſes the ſecurity of good government; and that if one part ſhould at any time uſurp, or exerciſe, more power than the law has given it, or makes an ill uſe of legal power, the other two parts may, by uniting their ſtrength, reduce this power into its proper bounds, or correct the abuſe of it.

This ſyſtem, ſo pleaſing in theory, is the moſt bewitching, faſcinating order of things the human mind is capable of conceiving; and the contentions for its ſupport have contributed more to perſuade us that we enjoy the benefits of good government, and extenſive liberty, than to give us the real poſſeſſion of them. This alone is ſufficient to prove to me, that the conſtitution, though good and ſalutary, upon the whole, is yet, in ſome reſpects, materially defective. How far the different powers are properly ballanced and defined, is the object of my enquiry. The inveſtigation of this will naturally open and diſplay

diſplay its defects.—It will remain with you to apply the remedy.

After all that has been advanced on the ſcience of government and politics, it yet remains to be proved, by practice, whether a legiſlature, ſupreme in the whole ſcience of government, decreeing and executing by agents of its immediate appointment, is capable of producing thoſe effects to which the wiſdom, moderation, energy, and ſplendor, of a mixed form of government is equal. I ſay, energy; for it is poſſible that contingencies may ariſe, when the execution ſhould be almoſt inſtantaneous: and ſplendor; for too great an uniformity of habits, occupations, and manners, might degenerate into a ſluggiſh dullneſs which would rob our ſublunary felicity of half its charms. This ſort of government, *viz.* the mixed form, is moſt likely to ſuit all orders and diſpoſitions of men, and moſt likely to bring into play the various talents which are to be found in human nature: for, when merit has a fair chance, it ſeems to promiſe to arrive at all that perfection, to which our limited capacities are competent.

I know this opinion will be objected to by republicans, upon the principle, that their form of government is equally ſuſceptible of the ſame advantages, without the expences of monarchy; that preference given to merit is the *primum mobile* and eſſence of their ſyſtem; but the competitors are too numerous, and the right of determining by far too extenſive for that preciſion and order ſo neceſſary for the quiet and harmony of mankind. I will ſay nothing of the ancient government, of which ſo much has been ſaid already; and which, in my opinion, were barbarous, compared with the preſent enlightened ideas upon the ſubject. The government of America is republican, but mixed, though none of the orders are hereditary. It is a new ſpecies of republicaniſm; and I hope, for the honour of human nature, it will prove as eligible as any other mixed government. It is at any rate an experiment in politics, and its ſucceſs will be a proof of the wiſdom of its founders. It would have been abſurd in them to have erected a diſtinction of men, even if the temper of the times of its creation would have admitted of it.

To trace the influence of the Crown through the various ſtages of the government

ment of this country, would be a work of time, as well as irrevelent in this undertaking. It is ſufficient to know, that at the glorious revolution of 1688, that its prerogatives were in a great meaſure defined; but unfortunately, the privileges of the different branches of the legiſlature, were not poiſed with ſufficient preciſion to give permanent ſecurity to the tranquility of the people; however, a great point was gained, which has been, perhaps, the material cauſe of the ſucceſs, proſperity, and happineſs, which the people of England have ſince enjoyed, and it is the beſt argument in favour of the aſcertainment of its peculiar eſſence in government, and the point or line at which it ought to be limited; which done in a conciſe manner, there then may be chance of arriving at a juſt idea of the perfections, or imperfections, of ſuch a conſtitution as that of Great-Britain. But, until that is done, it muſt continue to be as heretofore, a mere government of miniſters, counteracted at leſs fortunate æras by the opinion of the people, and conſequently ſubject to thoſe diſorders and diſtreſſes incidental to a weak or wicked adminiſtration: a fluctuation which diſgraces an enlightened nation, characterizes a marcidity of intellect in them to ſuffer it; and to indure which is a hardſhip

we ſhall deſerve as long as we are content to bear the impoſition.

After the rebellion of 1745, we may look upon the Crown as firmly fixed upon the preſent illuſtrious family; and that ſuch a ſecurity given to the nation, particularly after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, in December 1748, as might have enabled government to have attended to the arts of peace alone, and to the means neceſſary to liquidating a debt, which, in a great meaſure, had been accumulated in ſtruggles for the liberty of Engliſhmen, and the benefit of mankind in general; and, which, at that time, was conſidered as a burthen as highly oppreſſive to the induſtrious part of the nation, as it was dangerous to the manufacturing and commercial intereſt, the firſt object of an inſulated and maritime people. But mark the reverſe. Interfering in every petty quarrel which took place among the tyrants upon the continent, and ſquandering thoſe treaſures in uſeleſs wars which the ingenious induſtry of the manufacturer, and the hardy labour of the cultivator, had earned and chearfully yielded to government; flattered with hopes, that the time would arrive, when the premiums of their talents and ſweat would be appropriated

to lightening the load which he had long willingly borne as the price of his liberty, and that peaceful tranquility which a ſettled government produces.

I beg not to be told, that theſe wars were neceſſary to ſupport that imaginary balance of power which has been ſo much talked of, and ſo little underſtood; that it was neceſſary to check the imperial force of one tyrant, to prevent a leſſer one being ſwallowed up; that it was the glory of Britain to hold the ſcales of juſtice in one hand, and the ſword of terror in the other, that theſe wars gave a hardineſs to her ſons which prepared them for the defence of their own privileges, and acquired a glory and luſtre to the name of Britains, which has given them a pre-eminent rank among the potentates upon the globe. This is all unſubſtantial as the fictions of a poetical brain. What would it, in common ſenſe, ſignify to Engliſhmen, whether an Auſtrian, Pruſſian, Saxon, or Ruſſian tyrant prevailed? Would the condition of their miſerable and unfortunate vaſſals, have been in any degree bettered? On the contrary, did not our interference rather tend to prolong thoſe ſanguinary wars which deſolated whole countries, reduced millions of human

human beings to that degradation and diſtreſs which is ſhocking to think of, and place that unfeeling monſter a tyrant in a more frightful point of view than could be done by the moſt laboured deſcriptions of his depredations? When did the Engliſh want examples of courage or experience in the perils of war to teach them bravery? The very thought is a libel upon their magnanimity and ſpirit. How did the aborigines of our country treat the illuſtrious, but tyrannic Cæſar? How dearly did they ſell their lives at the Norman invaſion, though their claim was dubious? What nation or people under heaven ever gave more martial proofs of innate intrepidity and determined reſolution than they did in the coutinual and ſucceſsful wars againſt France, or in the long, bloody, and civil wars, for power and ſucceſſion to the Crown, which had their origin in contentions againſt the encroachments of regal tyranny until the final ſettlement in favour of Henry the Seventh? How rudely did they treat the grand armament, ſent by that impotent enemy to human nature, Philip the Second of Spain, to chaſtiſe them, as he thought, for the diſguſt he had conceived againſt them, for preſuming to think like men? To ſay nothing of the numerous inſtances in more modern

times,

times, in which they have proved, that they ſtill inherit the courage and bravery of their anceſtors.

The war, which commenced in 1755, was upon ſufficient grounds, thoſe of defending our infant colonies on the other ſide of the Atlantic againſt the incroachments of the French; but, perhaps, that was a conſequence of former wars *. Where was the neceſſity of interfering with the wars upon the continent of that epocha? I could deduce a variety of arguments, from ſimple facts, why the nation ought to have avoided it, but which are of ſo recent a nature, and of which ſo much has been ſaid, that it would partake of nugacity to add any thing here; particularly as it is only my intention to point out former errors as far as they help to detect the cauſe of abuſe and danger, and ſhew how they are to be prevented in future.

This war cloſed. England triumphed in the four quarters of the globe. The brows

* I have not thought it neceſſary here to trouble the reader, by pointing out how that could have been a conſequence; for a politician who cannot diſcover ſuch a corollary, muſt have too weak a head to be ſuſceptible of conviction.

of our heroes were encircled with laurels; every breeze brought freſh tidings of our wealth and proſperity; frantic joy wantoned in the voluptuous gambols of luckineſs and ſtreaming plenty; and the nation felt like as a ſucceſsful gameſter intoxicated with fortune. But, alas! too ſoon experienced, that chances are in the power of all alike, only with the exception, that the moſt adroit and ſkilful will generally carry off the prize. But what may be allowable for a man of deſperate circumſtances is a diſgrace to a great nation. A nation finds permanent ſecurity, increaſing wealth, and, above all, equal felicity from ſecuring general protection and encouragement to all orders of men alike.

It was the immortal Pitt (repugnant as it was to his underſtanding to engage in that part of the war) who animated by his vigor and eloquence, and gave an irreſiſtible energy and force, to whatever his meaſures extended, which, in a great meaſure, contributed to the eclat of thoſe times.

But what was permanent of thoſe dazzling achievements? We acquired an extenſion of territory upon the continent of America, and gave ſecurity by the acceſſion of Canada to

our then colonies againſt the ambition of France, or rather of the tyrants of France: we acquired ſome ſecurity and acceſſion of territory in the Eaſt-Indies: but, what did we acquire upon the continent of Europe? (I do not aſk this by way of triumph; for I feelingly declare, it is merely that you may turn your thoughts to the ridiculous, extravagant, and ruinous ſyſtem of interfering with continential affairs). I won't upbraid you with the ſafety of Hanover, for I believe the whole of that buſineſs was as oppoſite to the wiſhes of the nation, as it was uppermoſt in the heart of the ſovereign, and no doubt in the benevolence of your hearts you found an excuſe for that predilection; but, while I admire your ſympathy, I muſt beg leave to caution you againſt the dangerous evils which may ariſe from theſe attachments, ſo long as the conſtitution continues the ſame as at preſent.

I will now take notice of the American war, and ſo proceed in order to the preſent times. The war againſt America I preſume will be acknowleged by all parties, was not the war of the nation, nor do I conceive it was that of the King, but that of his miniſters, or of men who had continually ſur-

rounded him from his youth, and who ſtill continued to influence and direct his politics; and who, ſuggeſting the unpopular meaſure of taxing America in an unconſtitutional manner, prepared the mind of the Sovereign for hoſtilities, and continued a diſgraceful war for ſeven years, thereby giving a convincing proof of the neceſſity of reſtricting the miſchievous privilege of making war, and of the fallacy of that part of our government, which ſuppoſes the nation may counteract its dangerous influence by its repreſentatives.

That war was unjuſt, to ſay the leaſt of it; becauſe its object was to force a people into taxation without being repreſented. "Taxation exiſts only in repreſentation," ſaid Lord Chatham, who had previouſly ſaid, with an energy peculiarly to himſelf, "The "Gentleman tells us, that America is ob- "ſtinate; America is almoſt in a ſtate of re- "bellion; I rejoice that America has reſiſted. "Three millions of people ſo dead to the "feelings of liberty, as voluntarily to ſubmit "to be ſlaves, would have been fit inſtruments "to have made ſlaves of the reſt." Theſe were the ſentiments of one of the greateſt men that any country ever produced; and I believe they were the ſentiments of the greateſt part

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of the nation, yet the war was not only continued, but continued with all the force the nation was capable of employing, and at a greater expence, than this, or any other country ever carried on a war. In contempt of the humble ſupplications of the defenceleſs Americans, in oppoſition to the brighteſt faculties in parliament, to the moſt brilliant oratory that ever was diſplayed with all the ſplendor and advantage the ſubject gave it, and to the luctiferous murmurs of generous indignation without doors. Such was the power of the executive part of the government, in the ſupremacy of its influence hurrying every thing before it, diſdaining all bounds and reſtrictions, like an unruly current, ſwelled with inceſſant rains, overturning all artificial barriers, and bearing impetuous upon its raging tide the hard-earned wealth of ages, and leaving the diſconſolate huſbandman to mourn over the ruins of his ſhattered fortune. But what is to be done? To ſigh over theſe devaſtations will never prevent the like in future. The elements will continue the ſame, ſubject to the ſame guſts and raging ſtorms. He muſt be alert, exerciſe his ingenuity and ſkill. Time gradually perfects every thing: experience teaches wiſdom; and it is by a judicious appropriation of

knowledge

knowledge, that our comforts and happineſs are to be made ſtable. New means muſt be found out to confine theſe currents, and prevent the like evils in future. The remedy is obvious, no ſovereign ought to have the power of making war, except in caſes of ſudden invaſion, or ſubſtantial information that ſuch a thing is threatened, of the validity of which information the two houſes of parliament ſhould have the power or privilege of judging, and the miniſter ſhould be made reſponſible.

Our former proſperity and immenſe wealth has given us the appearance of being a flouriſhing people, ſince that unhappy war; though according to the general computation we loſt 100,000 men, and ſunk 100,000,000 of money. While the number of lives thus wantonly ſacrificed ſhocks our humanity, our wonder and indignity is excited at our moderation, in bearing patiently the aggravated evil of ſuch an accumulated debt.

New burthens have been laid upon the ſubject, who has chearfully paid them, for that love of his country which a generous heart feels in the degradation of tutelary authority. We have willingly given up many

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of the comforts of life, and ſacrificed many of thoſe ſoothing elegancies which conſtitute the blandiſhments of ſublunary joy, with the pleaſing hope that government would continue to make it their firſt object, to lighten our oppreſſions; which were almoſt forgotten in the flattering promiſes that have been made us. Is good nature to be oppreſſed? or are the hard-earned hoards which induſtry and prudence have laid by for times of ſcarcity, misfortune, or decrepid age, to be prodigally ſported with from the caprice or weakneſs of miniſters? who value higher the viſionary charms of a precarious reputation (which in the opinion of all men of ſenſe are infamous) than the comfort and happineſs of a munificent country groaning under the continual weights which are perpetually heaped upon them? This is not the end of government; and as I like to ſpeak from eſtabliſhed authority I will quote that acknowledged great law writer, Sir William Blackſtone, who ſays, " The laws of " nature being coeval with mankind, and " dictated by God himſelf, are of courſe ſu- " perior in obligation to any other. It is " binding over all the globe in all countries, " and at all times: no human laws are of " any validity if contrary to that which tends " to the happineſs of mankind." This au-

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thority admitted, the queſtion is reduced to this ſhort iſſue. Have the laws and government of this country produced that happineſs and proſperity which they are bound to do, or do they promiſe to do it in future? If not, thoſe parts which are deficient, or productive of evil, are revocable.

It is fair to judge from cauſe to effect. The only analogy of reaſoning is this. Is a debt of nearly three millions an advantage to Great Britain or not? Or, does a conſiderable debt contribute more to the proſperity of a nation than no debt? If I am anſwered in the negative (and I preſume no man in his ſenſes would anſwer me otherwiſe) I think that it proves to a demonſtration, the wars which this country have been engaged in for near fifty years paſt, taken in the aggregate, have been hurtful to its proſperity. Were theſe wars undertaken for the defence, ſafety, or the ſecurity of the intereſt of Great Britain? In part they were; but a very ſmall part. However, we will admit, for the ſake of argument, that all the wars ſince the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle to that of America were immediately neceſſary for this country to engage in. But I will not admit that it was neceſſary to have hazarded any thing upon the continent.

nent. So long as this country remains insulated, it muſt depend for ſafety on the ſtrength of its navy, and the good faith and bravery of its inhabitants. Were theſe properly ſupported and encouraged, the free citizens of Britain would have nothing to fear from the combined force of the whole earth, even in times of rapine and barbariſm if they ever ſhould return. But, thank God, reaſon and philoſophy have at length triumphed over ſuperſtition, ſin, and ignorance, and illuminated both hemiſpheres.

Should all the panegyriſts in favour of the prerogatives of the Crown combine in aſſerting their excellence in ſuch a government as ours, I preſume that men of common ſenſe will allow, that what once might have been wholeſome and wiſe, may be, at this enlightened period, not only dangerous but ruinous. To what a ſtate of degradation have the frequent wars of this country reduced that valuable order of men, the laborious poor? Wars undertaken in the arrogance of power; in open defiance of juſtice, public opinion, the real intereſts of the nation, and every thing elſe that ought to be held ſacred.

What would now be the ſtate of England if theſe ſuperfluous, preſumptuous, and ruinous wars, had never have taken place. The national debt would have been at this time 150 or 200,000,000 leſs than it is at preſent, to ſay nothing of the manner in which this enormous ſum might have been appropriated to the entire liquidation of the then exiſting public burthen, and to the glory, honour, and embelliſhment of Great-Britain. The taxes conſequently would not have been more than one-third, or half of what they are at preſent, our commerce would have had double the advantage which it now has; and our comforts, inſtead of being abridged as they have been, would have been increaſed: the laborious poor would have been happy, and thoſe indigent mortals, who crowd our ſtreets and highways, for want of employ in many inſtances, imploring impotent pity, or a miſerable half-penny to purchaſe themſelves a morſel of bread, would not have been ſeen or heard of.

It is in vain we are told, that no poor in Europe are ſo well taken care of as the poor of England*, that is both foreign to the

* For my own part, I cannot be mightily pleaſed with the laws which have done this, which have provided better to feed than to employ the poor.—Spect. No. 232.

purpoſe,

purpoſe, and no reaſon why they ſhould not be better. The hoſpitals are magnificent; and, in many of them, the regulations wiſe and ſalutary, but the poor laws are defective; and thoſe who are of a different opinion I recommend to read that ineſtimable work, Smith's "Wealth of Nations," a work, I am afraid, which has not yet been ſufficiently read to be known and underſtood.

Are theſe collected conſiderations to have no weight? Is the conſtitution to be left in a ſtate which will permit government to tranſgreſs the ſame bounds with impunity? Are we to ſink into a lethargy like an inanimate and ruined man, who views with ſtupid awe the impending cloud, which lours over his diſtracted head, and finds himſelf drawn over the brink of perdition before his reſolution returns? Our fields will remain, but anarchy may lay them waſte, diſorder and clamour may wait at the door of every citizen, and the gorgeous monuments of our glory and fame may be ſhattered, the ſumptuous deeds of our envied heroes and worthies may periſh in the general wreck, diſtraction may be gorged in the plunder of the moſt ſplendid opulence, which human art and induſtry is capable of accumulating.

It was an expreſſion of Cardinal De Retz, "When perſons have been for a long while "in ſuſpence about the undertaking a thing "by reaſon of their fear in not ſucceeding in "it, the impreſſion which that fear leaves in "their minds, is commonly the cauſe of their "going on afterwards too faſt in that un-"dertaking," which is equally applicable to a government. It is by gradual amendments of any ſyſtem that order is to be preſerved in the removal of the peccant parts. It is by order and moderation, that we can preſerve whatever is beautiful and ſolid. The amendment of the conſtitution has been long talked of, both in parliament and out of it. The landed and great monied intereſt, have, for a long time, governed every thing, the influence of the Crown excepted, which has compromiſed in ſome inſtances; reaſon will predominate in its turn; the veil is removed, and when oppreſſive burthens, with their grinding influence, touch the vital parts of property, the paſſions of men will then be rouſed, and the continual abuſes of repeated armaments, and additional taxes will ſtare them broad in the face; which had, in ſome meaſure, been hid from them by an overflowing proſperity, and a fond attachment for our conſtitution.

Such

Such are the advantages of a free government, notwithſtanding all the abuſes, that England has been in a degree the emporium, and miſtreſs of the globe, while the inhabitants of almoſt every other empire have groaned under the fetters of tyranny. Shall not liberty be ſuffered to keep her native ſeat? Will Engliſhmen ever let it be ſaid, that her altars have been violated, and that the fair deity finding herſelf no longer worſhipped, had inauſpiciously flown to more favoured regions? No ſuch thing. She was born with us, ſhe is wedded to our natures. The deſpotiſm of abuſe may operate for a time; but freedom muſt return more lovely and vigorous than ever, to renovate her decayed empire, this has ever been the caſe, after thoſe illuſtrious ſtruggles which have marked the wiſdom of her famed votaries. "Free-"dom," ſaid Mr. Fox, one day, when he was more uſually brilliant, "conſiſts in the ſafe and "ſacred poſſeſſion of a man's property, go-"verned by laws certain and defined, with "many perſonal privileges, natural, civil, and "religious, which he cannot ſurrender with-"out ruin to himſelf; and, of which, to be "deprived by any other power was deſpo-"tiſm." Our laws are neither defined, nor certain in all caſes. Civil liberty is violated

every

every day in conſequence of the extenſion of the deteſtable exciſe ſyſtem, which half a century paſt, in the caſe brought forward by Sir Robert Walpole, (that enemy to virtue and good morals) threw the whole nation into a threatening tumult.

Such is the inſidious influence of the preſent reprehenſible ſyſtem, it works ſecretly, it corodes one arch at a time, and will imperceptibly ſap the main foundation, if no remedy is applied in ſeaſon, but that, I truſt, is enthroned in the boſom of every Engliſhman; and, when their eyes are open, to behold the poiſon, I can have no doubt the antidote will be applied.

We come now to conſider the uſe that has been made of this prerogative during the preſent adminiſtration, which has produced three armaments in little more than four years, reckoning from the commencement of the armament againſt the Dutch, in June, 1787, to the diſarming the equippement deſigned to have acted againſt Ruſſia in Auguſt laſt; which, taken altogether, muſt have coſt the nation, moderately ſpeaking, between five and ſix millions.

The

The armament againſt the Dutch was generally conſidered judicious, and was a glorious proof of the miniſter's abilities for war, it increaſed his popularity, and even his opponents applauded his wiſdom. To me, and to many diſpaſſionate, ſenſible men, it appeared at the very time a moſt extravagant deluſion: I believe occaſioned by the reſentment conceived againſt thoſe induſtrious traders for their interference in favour of the Americans. It was of ſo recent a date, that I did not much wonder that a brave, indignant, and generous people, who had beheld their country attacked on every ſide, and threatened almoſt with immediate ruin, ſhould feel their courage revive that animation which is the peculiar characteriſtic of freedom, and which led to thoſe happy ſucceſſes which accelerated the termination of that inglorious war; but it is rather extraordinary, that the firſt miniſter of a country, who ought to be the guardian, as agent for the ſupreme magiſtrate, of the people's intereſt, and whoſe ſituation ought to make him accountable as ſuch, ſhould have been governed by a like reſentment; for it is not eaſy to diſcover the policy of ſo premature an interference, in that ſhameful affair, even admitting that the Stadtholder was an

injured prince, and that this country was bound in gratitude to wipe away the indignities with which the *rude* Hollander had covered him. The nation wanted repoſe, and the miniſter had aſſured them, that the receipt of the Exchequer exceeded the expenditure half a million annually, which would ſoon provide a ſinking fund tending to leſſen the national debt, and reſtore to old England her former ſplendor and comfort.

As the politics upon the continent were not materially affected by the events of that war, I preſume I ſhall not be accuſed of reaſoning from events, if I venture to inquire into the policy of that interference, particularly as I ſhall ground my chief arguments upon principles *à priori*. The oſtenſible policy of the miniſter was to reſtore to the Stadtholder thoſe powers, and that deſpotiſm which the *unruly Dutch*, (who, by the bye, had only brought back their government to its original ſtandard, recalling thoſe privileges which had been inſidiouſly uſurped by their Stadtholder,) had reduced in times of patriotiſm and juſtice: to counteract the dangerous leagues which the machinations, and intriguing diſpoſitions of the French might produce: ſecuring to Europe that balance of power ſo

neceſſary

neceſſary to the *peace and ſafety of its different kingdoms and empires;* but above all acquiring an ally, confederating with Pruſſia; and thus this triple alliance, holding the balance of Europe in their hands, and reſtoring the favorite ſyſtem of interfering with the affairs of the continent in all its extent and ſplendor, which had been conſiderably ſullied from the time miniſters had made the ſubjection of America the object of their ambition. So that it is plain the plenitude of power, which they enjoy in their appointments as miniſters, as the conſtitution now exiſts, prompts them to ſeek for means to gratify their ambition and pride, and is another moſt lamentable proof of the neceſſity of contracting the boundaries of their ſway.

All ſenſible men had beheld the dawn of liberty in France; and, if they were very buſy in the Dutch affair, it ſhould have been attributed to the diſpoſition of the then miniſter of France, Calonne, whoſe attachment to the ancient tyranny of that country, he has ſince ſufficiently evinced to the world, by the fugitive excurſions he has made to almoſt every court in Europe, ſupplicating aid for the reſtoration of deſpotiſm. But, admitting

Calonne had ſucceeded, which it is moſt likely he would have done, had neither England nor Pruſſia interpoſed in the matter; would it have retarded the freedom of Frenchmen? or would it have made the Dutch leſs our friends? I believe neither. I remember that brilliant orator, the late Mirabeau, in his ſecret letters from the court of Berlin, lamented that he had no oſtenſible employment, and ſeemed to contemplate, with great ſatisfaction, the then expected meeting of the Aſſembly of the Notables, which was to take place in 1787; and it was expected that circumſtance would occupy the whole attention of the French court. The glorious adminiſtration of the comptroller-general, Monſieur Turgot, had given them, previous to their interference in the American war, the etherial proſpect of freedom which had diffuſed a ray of light through the diſmal horizon of deſpotiſm, which acquired the moſt lovely luſtre by contraſt, and which gave Frenchmen ſome idea of liberty, not only in theory, but in the real enjoyment of it. But admitting that it was not in the compaſs of human foreſight, that France would have been ſeriouſly engaged in their domeſtic affairs, I ſhould be glad to be informed, whenever they precipi-

tated

tated themſelves into a war to ſupport foreign ſtates or kingdoms, or engage in their quarrels, until ſhe had formed a pretty juſt idea how far that ſtate or kingdom would be able to ſupport itſelf, or till their opponents were harraſſed in their finances and ſtrength? Did not that able politician Richlieu, in the long wars in Germany, continue to encourage Guſtavus Adolphus until great part of Germany was laid waſte, and till the reſources of the empire were exhauſted, before the armies of France were ſuffered to move? Did they hazard any thing for America till after the convention of Saratoga? The object uppermoſt in their hearts was, that of ſevering the colonies from the mother-country; at a time too, when their finances and navy were in a flouriſhing condition. Is it poſſible that any man then, who had made politics his ſtudy, could believe, that France, in the ſhattered ſtate her navy was then in, would imprudently hazard a conteſt with ſuch puiſſant competitors as they ſaw were preparing for them, when the condition of their finances was alſo ruinous, threatening an immediate bankruptcy, and their country upon the eve of burſting the fetters of tyranny and abuſe, which might involve them in every horror

of civil war. I will allow Mirabeau, the confidential emiſſary of Calonne, was duped, both at the court of Berlin, and by the Duke of Brunſwick, ſtill the armies of France would not have moved, or at leaſt would not have acted until they had ſeen what ſtand the patriots of Holland were likely to make. So that it is obvious, the marching of the Duke of Brunſwick, with the powerful ſupport the Statdholder had in both navy and army, would have ſettled that inglorious affair without any equipment on the part of this country, and thereby have ſaved the nation nearly a million of money, if not quite.

The armaments againſt Spain and Ruſſia, were maſter-pieces of their kind. The former might have been neceſſary, but it was managed with a puerility, and wavering which would have diſgraced a council of ſchool-boys. If the commercial intereſt, or dignity of Great-Britain had ſuffered, why was not a blow ſtruck immediately? The way to make tyrants and contumelious ſtates obſerve the faith of treaties, hoſpitality to ſtrangers, and the law of nations, is to chaſtiſe them without delay for their wanton cruelties and tyrannic depredations. Spain has too long

inſulted the moderation of this country with impunity, in the courſe of the preſent century, reſpecting imaginary limits, or indefinite rights upon the coaſt of America, to have had any indulgence, or time for repentance ſhewn her. The moment of action was, when the information was firſt authencated, of their having detained Britiſh property in contempt of exiſting treaties, or at furtheſt upon the return of the firſt meſſenger, as Spain did not promiſe immediate reſtitution. " There are moments," ſaid the late King of Pruſſia, " which require us " to exert all our activity in order to profit " by them." I will allow, (as it is not my intention to quibble,) that the miniſter did employ all poſſible activity; but it was merely in equiping. Meſſenger after meſſenger was diſpatched, and returned, until the extravagance of the folly ſhrouded the miniſter's motives in ſuch a myſtery, that the French, who were buſily employed about their own domeſtic affairs, not able to develope his real intentions were alarmed, dreading the armament might be intended to aſſiſt their fugitive princes, in aiming at a counter revolution, they determined in that perilous moment, as they thought, to examine the Family Compact, to arm and

ſupport Spain. Count Florida De Blanca, the miniſter of Spain, had now gained his point, was ready to negociate, ſettled preliminaries, *which are to direct the Engliſh* how they are to conduct themſelves in future, in their viſits to the *ſovereign realms of his Catholic Majeſty on the ſhores of America*; and which left the Britiſh trade in no better ſituation than it was previous to that rupture, they agreed to reimburſe the merchant for the loſſes he had ſuſtained, in the violation of his property; the amount of which I have never learnt with exactitude, but it is generally underſtood it was ſomewhere about 15 or 20,000*l.*; which ſeems to be the only indemnification we are likely to obtain for the immenſe expence of that armament*.

* It would appear like an intention of inſulting your underſtandings, to dilate upon the manner in which this buſineſs ſhould have been conducted: the moſt common capacity will recollect, that the favourable period for that armament to have detected the Spaniards' homeward-bound galleons, would have been ſufficient to have pointed out the expediency of ſending the fleet to have cruiſed off Cadiz, which in all probability would have ſecured an indemnification for arming, and have given us peace upon our own terms; for it is not likely, that had we acted with ſuch deciſion, the French would have ſtirred in the matter, particularly as they looked upon us as freemen at that time, with whom they were diſpoſed to have been in the cloſeſt alliance; and certainly Spain ſingly is too impotent an enemy for us to doubt ſucceſs.

Let

Let us now close the ſcene on what the world calls a farce, but what Engliſhmen feel to be a tragedy of the moſt affecting kind, in order to clear the ſtage for a diſplay of the improved pantomimical abilities of Mr. Pitt.

Ruſſia and the Turks had been at war for ſome three or four years, with ſome conſiderable advantage on the ſide of the Ruſſians, one a barbarous people, the other beginning to emerge from barbariſm; and who, from the liberal encouragement given to arts and ſciences, begin to wear that poliſh which diſtinguiſhes a civiliſed nation. Their vaſt extent of country approximating to the Pole, confined four months in the year at leaſt by intenſe froſt; which, from the nature of their government, which is arbitrary, and from the luxurious artificial aids, which men, high in northern regions require to give them animation, makes them an advantageous connection to a commercial and manufacturing country. They have ſhewn that predilection for Britiſh goods, which their ſuperior excellence has given them in every part of the world. But thoſe hardy and judicious Ruſſians, emboldened by their ſucceſſes, which the art of war gave them over their ferocious and unſkilful neighbours, were about to drive

theſe *unfortunate barbarians* out of Europe, at leaſt this appeared would be the caſe to the *tutelary guardians of the ballance of power.* Meſſengers were immediately diſpatched from court to court; and it was determined to check the victorious arms of Ruſſia. Preparations were made for war with the greateſt activity in Pruſſia; their armies were put in motion while the Empreſs was deſired to ſtay her hand, and check that pride for conqueſt which had already cauſed ſo much uſeleſs bloodſhed, and which was tending to overthrow the *equilibrium of power* in Europe, and conſequently dangerous to the tranquility of mankind in general. The Empreſs replied with ſpirit, and much good ſenſe, that after the peace of 1775 between Ruſſia and the Porte ſhe had faithfully adhered to the ſtipulations agreed on between her and the Turks, but that theſe reſtleſs Ottomans had haughtily demanded, that the country called the Crimea, ſhould be receded to them; that is, in plain Engliſh, if ſhe would not give back what they had conceded to her, as an acknowledgment of Ruſſian ſuperiority (the only acknowledgement that deſpotiſm ever makes, for juſtice is out of the queſtion) they would renew the war, and take poſſeſſion of it by force, which forced her into a *defenſive war*, for

for that ſhe could not relinquiſh what had been ſo dearly earned, and which the object and œconomy of her government required ſhe ſhould keep poſſeſſion of. That fortune had crowned her arms with the moſt ample ſucceſs; but, ever diſpoſed to pacific meaſures, ſhe was moſt ſincerely deſirous to ſecure tranquility to Europe, by giving peace to the Porte; but, that ſhe required the further ceſſion of Oczakow and its diſtrict, comprehending the Bog, as an indemnification for the very great expence this unprovoked war had put her to. But no, ſay the *voluntary umpires*, "We will judge between you; you "ſhall make peace upon the terms offered by "the Porte; and if you do not conclude "a treaty upon ſuch conditions we ſhall "aid the Turks with all our forces by land "and ſea." The Empreſs would not recede, but determined to wait the iſſue. The Britiſh fleet was again equiped; and, after ſix or ſeven months negociation, theſe *umpires* agreed, that if the Ottoman's would not make peace upon the terms firſt aſked by the Empreſs (that is, ſecuring the object of her demands), they were to be abandoned, and left to the fortune of war. Such was the object and end of the laſt armament. I will leave you to judge, if ſuch

intemperance does not call aloud for the immediate interference of all good citizens to prevent the devoted bark from ſcudding before the gale of miniſterial power into the gulph of ruin.

Every man who has read the hiſtory of modern Europe with attention, muſt be convinced that there have been very few inſtances, when the interference of this country could have been of any good effect in the affairs of the continent. It ſeems to have been neceſſary to check the ambition of Louis XIV. for the ſafety of mankind in general, and for ſupporting the perſecuted Proteſtants, ſuch a ſtep muſt always have been conſidered as wiſe, as it tended to general good, and accelerated the extenſion of philoſophy and truth, and deſtroyed that veneration for tyrants, which the fetters of prieſtcraft are ſo well calculated to ſecure.

Caſt your eyes but over the accounts of the wars of Italy, Germany, France, &c. you will find, at one time, a moſt formidable confederacy of tyrants to deſtroy a ſmall but flouriſhing ſtate, which had excited their envy. View the ſame tyrants, almoſt in the ſame year, divided amongſt themſelves; and the vicegerent of Chriſt upon earth, as he

pre-

preſumptuouſly called himſelf, combating with a monarch, who was afterwards canonized: contemplate a miniſter of France proſcribing and condemning to eternal ruin thouſands of his worthy and induſtrious countrymen, on account of their religious ſentiments, and yet ſupporting the cauſe of the ſame religious ſects at the ſame time in Germany. Look but into the nature of the quarrel, and diſputes which led to thoſe ſanguinary wars about the middle of the preſent century, (which many living witneſſes muſt recollect,) which left half Europe in mourning, and you will find England ſupporting Auſtria, and the French Pruſſia; then, without the nature of the diſpute being changed, England is allied to Pruſſia, and France with Auſtria; without mentioning a number of changes which were made by leſs conſiderable powers. Beſides thouſands of inconſiſtencies equally palpable, which are to be found in the hiſtory of this and every other country, and which muſt continue as long as the dangerous prerogative exiſts, of kings making war and peace at pleaſure.

View attentively the object of the late armaments, and I am convinced, that all men of ſound heads, and good hearts, muſt be equally

convinced of their inutility, and that they muſt be either preparations of ambition, or directed by the folly of a ſtrange confuſion of mind, both of which muſt ever prove ruinous to the proſperity and happineſs of a country. If it ſhould be anſwered, that they were made in compliance with the ſacred engagements of the nation, as an excuſe, it is equally nugatory; why were the engagements entered into? The policy is the ſame, and muſt have originated from the ſame cauſe of ambition, or weakneſs. The fact is, it is the remains of a Gothic practice, which it does not become a free and enlightened people to ſuffer any longer to exiſt; and is a call upon them to interdict its effects in future. However, I will not leave the ſubject here; I will admit for a moment, that there *is* ſomething in this balance of power, and that it is becoming the dignity of Great-Britain to watch over it, and prevent its preponderating either way. But I ſhould be obliged to any man that is ingenious enough to tell me how, or upon what principles they draw the concluſion, that the extenſion of the Ruſſian or Auſtrian empire to the Black Sea, or even to Conſtantinople itſelf, can be either dangerous to the ſafety of Pruſſia, or hurtful to the trade of Great-Britain. Their approximation to thoſe eaſtern

ſeas,

ſeas, would naturally tend to weaken their influence and power in Europe. Such poſſeſſions would lead to new commercial objects, and new conqueſts, which would require their whole care and ſtrength to ſupport, and neceſſarily remove the capital of Ruſſia, at leaſt to more temperate regions, and ſeas more open, which would enable her to waft at pleaſure the productions of her arts and induſtry to diſtant climes.

This may be a work of time, but it will always form the firſt object of that wiſe and perſevering government. It is comprehended in the plan of that wonderful man the Czar, Peter the Great, who, perhaps, did not diſtinguiſh its full effects himſelf.

The Ruſſians, already civilized in a great degree, have made no ſmall progreſs in different arts and ſciences; and by the munificent ſupport and encouragement which liberal wiſdom and policy directs, they muſt, in another century, be equally poliſhed with any people in Europe.

Where is there a heart ſo phlegmatic as not to feel a rational enthuſiaſm in the idea, that thoſe once fertile fields, which have

long been diſſolated by the iron hand of ſavage brutality, may once more teem with thoſe luxuriant fruits, and that plenty ſo natural to their prolific ſoil. That thoſe numerous cities, populous towns, and monuments of ſcience, which once marked the opulence and flouriſhing ſtate of Greece and Aſia, which the ruthleſs hand of ignorance and fanaticiſm has levelled with the earth, and not even left a veſtige, may once more riſe like the phœnix from its aſhes more ſplendid and beautiful than ever. That philoſophy may reſume her dominion, and bring with her another Homer, another Apelles, and another Demoſthenes, and revive with them all its elegance, together with thoſe feats of literature and politeneſs, which have continued to be the admiration of mankind, but of which the rude hand of deſpotiſm has ſcarce left a ſymbol in the preſent wretched inhabitants of thoſe once poliſhed regions? Who has a head ſo dull as to think the civilization of a country in the remote parts of Europe, or on the borders of Aſia, or even of the whole world, would injure or deſtroy the trade of Great-Britain? Every climate has its particular productions, and will always call for the peculiar talents, or ingenuity neceſſary for the attainment of the object of its induſtry.

England

England is the moſt favoured ſpot upon the globe, its climate is the moſt temperate, its eternal verdure gives a chearful appearance to the face of the country, which is not known in any other part of the world. It has many other advantages which will always give its inhabitants a ſuperiority over other countries, and which are too well known to be enumerated here. But admitting that was not the caſe, it is as much the advantage of every trading country, that every other ſhould be rich, as it is better for an induſtrious man to have opulent neighbours inſtead of indigent ones.

I have dwelt at ſome length upon the privilege of the Crown to make war, as I conceive it to be the moſt dangerous of all its prerogatives; and, as I have endeavoured to reaſon from examples recently produced, and from the examples of its dangerous effects *, and not merely from theory, I flatter

* The ſubject, on which I am entering, is vaſt; but I will reſtrain myſelf within proper bounds, and be ſatisfied with reminding you, that the executive magiſtrate (of whom it behoves us to ſpeak reſpectfully, yet truly) has of late acquired two numerous branches, not of juſt prerogative, but of unconſtitutional power; *influence*, by receiving and diſpenſing at pleaſure all the gold, and *force*,

ter myſelf I ſhall have all candid men on my ſide of the argument. Numerous other inſtances might be produced to ſhew how dangerous it is to leave ſo important a power in the hands of any individual human being.

What was the conſequence of the nation's being bereft of this power in the long and inglorious adminiſtration of Sir Robert Walpole? They were inſulted, irritated, and

*force*, by commanding and ſubjecting to his nod all the ſteel of the nation; thus holding in his mighty graſp, as the thunderer of the antients is repreſented on *Olympus*, the two ſinews of war; by one of which the coequal parts of the legiſlature may continually be ſapped, and by the other it may at any time be ſtormed. I have heard undue *prerogative* compared to a *giant* who beſtrides our narrow iſland, and may at his diſcretion ſuſpend his maſſey club over our heads, or reduce us to powder with its weight, whilſt *influence* reſembles *a fairy*, who plays around us inviſibly, or aſſumes any ſhape that ſuits her purpoſe, and often drops gold or patents in proper places, as a reward or incentive for ſuch as merit the approbation of the little wanton divinity. Attempts to bring back the conſtitution, to its genuine temperament, are ſo far from being ſeditious, or even derogatory from the reſpect due to the Crown, that they would, if ſucceſsful, highly augment the ſplendor of it; unleſs it be more glorious to rule, like princes upon the continent over *ſlaves*, than to be *chief in a nation of freemen*; an opinion, which no man who deſerves either dignity or freedom can entertain.

Sir *William Jones*, *Sept.* 1780.

ſcoffed

ſcoffed at, by a proud, ſupercilious people, who were as impotent as they were contemptible, without the inſulted having the power to take vengeance; perhaps, becauſe the miniſter was conſcious he poſſeſſed no talents for war; or, becauſe he dreaded riſking his popularity, as he well knew his nefarious and deteſtible ſyſtem of bribery, was ſo much the more likely to make his ſtation permanent, however diſhonorable it might be to the nation, which appeared to be of no more conſequence to him than did the loſs of his reputation as an honeſt man. So long as he enjoyed *douceurs* of office, ſo little did he ſcruple ſetting at defiance every thing human and divine.

Do not pretend to ſay ſuch a conduct can never happen again. I have enumerated conſequences more dangerous, which we have ſince derived from the ſame ſource. Look at them with unprejudiced minds, and with leſs fervour than Engliſhmen are accuſtomed to look at things in general, which reſpects their conſtitution. It was, perhaps, the moſt perfect model that human wiſdom could have invented for the government of men, in the ſtate Europe was in for many centuries back; but things have been altering

rapidly ſince the middle of the laſt century, and with *increaſed* rapidity in this. The complexion of Europe has changed intirely, and is likely to undergo a farther change. What was wiſdom at one time, may be folly at another. The laws of nature, and the unalienable rights of men are always the ſame. A government which is calculated to promote celerity of effect on adventitious occaſions ought to be altered, when thoſe caſes are no longer likely to happen, particularly when it is ſuſceptible of ſuch groſs, and dangerous abuſe, as that part of the Britiſh conſtitution has produced within the laſt fifty years. I repeat, that after the Crown was permanently ſettled, in the Proteſtant line of ſucceſſion, and the dangerous influence of controverſial diſputes in religious opinions done away, things became intirely altered, and that every reſtriction, or deprivation, which exiſted when the cauſe which produced them was no more, was tyrannic, and ſubverſive of the very end of all government, which is the happineſs and not the miſery * of men.

* No man can be happy who is deprived of a chance of arriving to the honors of his country in common with his fellow-citizens, but with the feelings of a man muſt find himſelf injured, and thus far miſerable.

When

When it is left to a wiſe and enlightened nation, who can have no private ambition to gratify, but to increaſe public good, and to determine when it is adviſable to enter into a war, they conſequently will be the beſt judges how far the object of the undertaking has ſucceeded, or how far it may be adviſable to continue it to a precarious iſſue. But national glory and proſperity, pure and unmixed with the ſhameful alloy of favoritiſm, being their only end, it is to the repreſentatives of the nation, or to their immediate agents, that the right of making peace ſhould belong alſo.

Foreigners, who have been ſpectators of the frequent abuſe of power in this country, have openly aſſerted that we have no conſtitution whatever; but that at one time we talk of the ſupremacy of Parliament, and at another of conſtitutional authority; thus by theſe "tranſitions exhibiting a nation under "the government of temper, inſtead of fixed "and ſteady principles." Though I do not allow this, I confeſs the very frequent abuſe of our privileges, gives too much reaſon for the concluſion; and if the conſtitution is not ſufficiently explicit in ſome parts, it is high time it was made ſo.

A government by King, Lords, and Commons, each with diſtinct and peculiar privileges, legiſlating and executing laws founded upon fixed principles, forms the baſis of our conſtitution. Where laws have been enacted in violation of theſe principles, or where powers have been extended, uſurped, and exerciſed, in contempt of theſe principles, is the object of our next enquiry.

The firſt that ſtrikes me is the unequal repreſentation of the people; which, if not contrary to the expreſs letter of our great charter of liberty, is contrary to the ſenſe and ſpirit of it: which meant clearly to preſerve *general* liberty and ſecurity both of perſon and property; but which ſeems equally to require a fuller explanation, and a perſpicuity given it which the æra of its glorious birth, from the nature of the then times and language did not admit of; and which defect, though that charter is ſpecifically good and wholeſome, has led to abuſes imperceptibly, and accounts for the intemperance of parliament, in extending the evil inſtead of remedying it: in the firſt place, by the repreſentation of boroughs and towns, in ſome inſtances almoſt without inhabitants, and in others without any regard to their intereſt or

population;

population; and to the excluſion of the repreſentation of ſeveral of the moſt populous and flouriſhing towns in the kingdom, contrary to the natural order of things, and oppoſite to the fundamental object of that charter, creating thereby an ariſtocratical, in the room of a mixed government; that while the intereſt of the people has, in a great meaſure, been unprotected, there has exiſted a kind of tacit conſent, or coalition between the ariſtocratical part of the nation and the Crown, which has led to the magnitude of the abuſes of the latter, while the great intereſt of the former has ſecured its own impunity; thus making the great body of the people mere cyphers.

To compleat and ſecure this tyranny, the Houſe of Commons, early in the reign of George the Firſt, by a vote the moſt extraordinary and unconſtitutional that ever was heard of, made the ſeats of that Houſe ſeptennial. "The power of Kings, Lords, and "Commons," ſaid that intrepid writer Junius, "is not an arbitrary power. They are "the truſtees, not the owners of the eſtate. "The fee-ſimple is in Us," (meaning the people). "They cannot alienate, they can-"not waſte; when we ſay, that the legiſla-

"ture

" ture is ſupreme, we mean that it is the " higheſt power known to the conſtitution; " that it is the higheſt in compariſon with the " other ſubordinate powers, eſtabliſhed by the " laws; in this ſenſe the word ſupreme is re- " lative, not abſolute. The power of the le- " giſlature is limited, not only by the general " rules of natural juſtice, and the welfare of " the community, but by the forms and prin- " ciples of our particular conſtitution." This uſurpation originated from the ſame ſource of evil, the predominating influence of ariſto- cracy. The ſame immortal writer ſaid, " there " is little difference between a ſeat in parlia- " ment for ſeven years, and a ſeat for life."

Here lies the miſchief; you have only to take a retroſpective view of the ruinous conſequences of frequent and reiterated abuſes and uſurpations, to find a ſtorm is gathering over our heads, and to be ſen- ſible, that you are called upon by every tie which good men prize moſt dear, that of bringing back our long eſtranged privi- leges to their origin, that of general proſ- perity, comfort, and happineſs to ourſelves, and that of ſecuring equal bleſſings to poſ- terity; to which we are bound by every tie, moral and natural, to prevent the im-

pending

pending calamities which ſuch growing abuſes muſt inevitably intail upon them, if no application is made in time*. Call upon your repreſentatives in Parliament, immediately to ſet about that correction ſo eſſential *to their own ſalvation* as well as yours; ſhew them how inglorious it would be to wait until ruin and deſtruction ſhall burſt over their affrighted heads; prove to them that the nation is awake; and that we both know from whence faults have ariſen, and feel the neceſſity of preventing them in future; tell them that we are convinced that there is no ſecurity in the preſent mode of repreſentation; and that as a proof to us of their fidelity, they muſt ſet about its reform in the firſt inſtance, as the moſt eſſential to lead to a general correction. "There are wounds which require the cau-

* I have ſeen in the Morning Chronicle of Dec. 16th, 1791, the proceedings at a meeting of the Society of United Iriſhmen of Dublin; which, for ſpirit and patriotiſm, does them the higheſt honour. It is the moſt manly decided proceeding that has taken place at any period of that government; and if they perſevere, I flatter myſelf all good Engliſhmen may felicitate them upon the event. I hope we ſhall ſhew equal ſpirit in our remonſtrances againſt the abuſes which are daily practiſed by our government.

" ſtic and inciſion-knife; and times when the
" General muſt lay his hand to the pick-axe
" and ſpade," ſaid an elegant writer.

What could be a greater proof of this overpowering influence, than the late affair of the Regency, of which there has already been ſo much ſaid by party or factious writers, men who have been more anxious to diſplay their own talents, than to inveſtigate the ſubject impartially, therefore choſe to eſtabliſh a new or middle principle of argument, which had no exiſtence either in truth, or the ſpirit of the conſtitution?

The Crown was made hereditary if it never was ſo before, by the practice of uninterrupted ſucceſſion in the preſent family; and as the conſtitution had acquired a more ſtable form at the Revolution, it was nugatory to have looked beyond that period for precedents.

No human laws have hitherto provided for every poſſible contingency which may happen to a government; and from that imperfection which will require time, and even chances to remove, flowed that embarraſſment of opinion, or rather opportunity for

that

that diverſity of ſentiment which men are too apt to ſhew upon all novel occaſions. But the ſpirit of the conſtitution, and the practice of government, ſo far as it reſpected the ſucceſſion of the next heir upon the natural death of a king or firſt magiſtrate, was decidedly in favour of what Mr. Fox ſtated in the Houſe of Commons: "That the Prince of Wales, as heir in ſuc-"ceſſion, had a right in himſelf to aſſume the "government." There was no fair argument againſt this opinion. A king, or firſt magiſtrate, in a ſituation not able to exerciſe the peculiar functions of his office, (and thereby the ſprings of government unbent,) is as much dead to the law as if naturally dead. And if that part of the conſtitution is wiſe, which not only admits, but even makes a principal of its eſſence, the hereditary and immediate ſucceſſion of the heir apparent, being of full age and qualified by law, upon the natural death of the king, with all the powers and privileges which have been delegated to the kingly office, clearly, the ſame ſucceſſion qualified, ſhould take place when ſuch king, or firſt magiſtrate, is dead to the law, or government; but if

that part of the conſtitution is unwiſe, the argument in truth and reaſon ſhould have been directed againſt the conſtitution, and the dangers of the prerogatives of the Crown*, and not againſt the meaſure; which was not the caſe. But recollect the event. The miniſter ſaw that parliament and the nation had fallen into the deluſion of his arguments; and the influence which his place gave him (as it does in every thing elſe) according to the preſent ſyſtem, ſecured the ſucceſs of his oppoſition.

This ſucceſs could flow but from two cauſes; either the generality of men in parliament thought the prerogatives of the Crown were, and are dangerous, or ſuperfluous, and that they might act without them whenever they could avail themſelves of an opportunity: or elſe, that ariſtocratical influence, which governs every thing in defiance of the people or conſtitution, produced this extraneous and dangerous proceeding.

* That which grows out of government or laws, and is liable to abuſe at one time, muſt be ſo at another; which is an additional argument in favour of reforms.

This

This was only the cauſe of the people, inaſmuch as it was the cauſe of the conſtitution; and if it is thus liable to abuſe with impunity, it ſhews, in the ſtrongeſt poſſible light, the precarious ſituation which the perſons and property of every Engliſhman are in, and muſt remain in, until ſtability is given to government by a clear and conciſe definition of all the parts, peculiar functions, and powers of the different branches of the conſtitution.

I ſhall paſs over the Coalition with a very few obſervations; believing that all cool, thinking men, muſt long before this be convinced that it was only an error of judgment in Mr. Fox, and not a deſertion of the cauſe of the people; and which error is not ſo much to be wondered at, if we impartially conſider the ſtate of the affairs of the nation at the end of the American war. The national debt, which had been, previous to the commencement of that war, thought more than could be borne for any length of time, was increaſed nearly 100,000,000. The manufactories in ſome parts were upon the decline; trade was thrown out of its channel; the affairs of India were in a ruinous ſtate after an admi-

niſtration of manœuvres and peculation, and the nation was divided into the moſt violent parties. It was time, in this perilous poſture of affairs, for every good man to lay aſide his reſentment, and it was only from unity and harmony, that relief was to be looked for. Something, at leaſt, was to be expected from the experience of the late miniſterial party. And the exigencies of government, with its wheels clogged, called for the collected wiſdom of the country. But we were alarmed for the prerogatives of the *Crown*—we have ſince paid for it. It is an old adage, but I think not the more homely for that account, "That bought "wit is beſt, if we do not pay too dear for "it." Let us profit by our experience, and not ſuffer in future either our reſentment or our fears to be premature. But we had fixed our minds upon a young man, whoſe father's immortal virtues and actions had given him a lovely celebrity, which added a graceful ſplendor to the extravagance of his promiſes: ſympathy frequently ſuffers our underſtandings to be impoſed upon; we ſtill loved and cheriſhed the memory of Lord Chatham. How fondly did we view the period when there would be a more equal repreſentation of our rights and intereſts? How much were we

flattered

flattered with the proſpect of a ſinking fund, which would lighten the weight of taxes; ſee again revived the activity of commerce; and behold the charms of plenty once more light that ethereal ſpark of freedom, which has long been covered in its embers by the influence of deſpotiſm.

This celebrity, with his promiſes, made him firſt miniſter, but it required a new Parliament to obtain a majority. The reform was propoſed, but in what way? or with what way of appearance of earneſt? The man had arrived at the object of his ambition, he had no longer occaſion to ſtudy reforms; but ſeems to have found it neceſſary to practice a dexterity to keep himſelf in office, which has been done in a more barefaced manner, and in a more bungling way than, perhaps, was ever before attempted to be practiſed upon a people in their ſenſes; but our ſenſes have ſlept under the influence of the dangerous opiate of promiſes from a man, who had firſt gained our confidence. "Hypocriſy may ſometimes deceive, but "cannot do it long, when able perſons un-"dertake to unmaſk it." It was long ſince unmaſked; but the nation has ſtill ſlumbered like a lethargic man, who hears, unconcerned, the

the rumbling harbinger of a threatening earthquake, until a tremendous ſhock rouſes his dormant ſenſes, he ſtarts on the brink of perdition only in time to ſave himſelf.

The fondeſt hopes of the nation have been blaſted; inſtead of having our burthens leſſened, new taxes have been laid, and new demands are likely to be continued, uſeleſs and wanton expences have been incurred, the diabolical exciſe ſyſtem has been extended in open violation of civil liberty, and a ſpecies of tyranny has been promoted in the ſummary trials of ſmugglers, the more dangerous, as it operates chiefly againſt characters who are noxious.

Look round you now your eyes are opening, and view the devaſtation with which a few years of reiterated abuſes, and contumelious ambition have ſurrounded us; we have precipices on every ſide but one, that is open for our eſcape; our refuge is in equal and juſt repreſentation, and ſhorter Parliaments; upon this every thing depends; our future tranquility, proſperity, glory, and, above all, our freedom, and rank as a nation.

Let

Let monied men, who, from a ſordid intereſt hard to be conceived, that have continually ſhewn attachments to government, under whatever ſhape or complexion it has appeared, read an ingenious foreign author, who, if if he has gone too far in ſome inſtances, (to which, perhaps, he may have been hurried from his predilection for republican governments,) yet he has treated the ſubject of national credit, in a judicious and obvious manner; and from thence learn, that it is from the nation *only* they are to expect permanent ſecurity, or future redemption.

We muſt not ſuffer ourſelves to be flattered, or our expectations to be raiſed with the ſucceſs of our arms in India. To have ſuppoſed, that a free and brave people, would not always triumph over an effeminate nation, governed by ignorance and tyranny, would have been a virtual impeachment of their courage, and betraying a want of confidence in ourſelves; which to every Engliſhman muſt appear a ſpecies of treaſon of the moſt dangerous kind. When did effeminacy and deſpotiſm prevail over freedom? When were Engliſhmen foiled, even when their foes were Europeans, and their preſent enemies

mere auxiliaries in India* ? I am far from not wiſhing to allow every due tribute of praiſe to the integrity and bravery of the preſent commander of the Engliſh forces in that country; and, as far as the Company's poſſeſſions have been ſecured, rejoice; but lament that trifling ſucceſſes ſhould acquire a celebrity, which may tend to prolong the exiſtence of a tyranny, not more oppreſſive to the poor Indian, than it is dangerous to the commercial privileges and liberties of Britain.

A chartered company monopolizing a moſt extenſive and fertile branch of trade, who have violated every condition of the grant, whoſe finances have been in a ruinous ſtate, have been ſupported by government at an enormous expence, merely as an engine to its tyranny.

It is high time that the nation ſhould take this buſineſs into its own hands, and put a

* The doubtful conſtructions put upon the diſpatches from India may, perhaps, induce ſome to think I mean this ironically; but I will not pay ſo ill a compliment to Engliſh bravery, or the integrity of Earl Cornwallis, as to harbour the ſhadow of doubt, that his victory before Seringapatam was not compleat; which is but another ſad proof that even his victories are ruinous.

final

final end to that cruelty, and peculation, which has rendered the very name of an Engliſhman deteſtible "even to a proverb "through all Aſia," and which is not more inglorious than it is repugnant to our true intereſt.

Chartered Companies, with excluſive privileges, may be uſeful in the infancy of commerce; when neither the capitals of individuals of a nation, or their knowledge in that trade, are ſufficient to make them ſucceſsful adventurers. Thus, when the Dutch were ſurrounded by the inhuman tyrants of Spain, in the infancy of their exiſtence as a ſtate, they formed a company to trade to the Eaſt, when thoſe ſeas were little known, when the ſituation of the affairs of Europe as well as their own required it; and when no individual capital would have been equal to ſo precarious an undertaking. Other European powers, finding thoſe induſtrious traders were thriving in that new undertaking, inſtituted like companies, which, in many inſtances were encouraged and ſupported by royal munificence and bounties; yet ſcarce one of them now exiſts but that of England; even the Dutch have been made bankrupts. Do not ſuppoſe that the Engliſh Company ſtill exiſts in con-

ſequence of their ſuperior wiſdom, greater ſkill, or more fortunate trade: no ſuch thing; government has ſupported them, at a moſt enormous charge; and while the nation has been obliged to pay this expence, they, at the ſame time, have been obliged to pay a higher price for their teas (the moſt material article from the Eaſt) than any other nation in Europe. Thus comes the practice of ſmuggling ſo general: a government which firſt holds out a prize for the violation of its own laws, and then puniſhes the criminal in an unconſtitutional manner, muſt exerciſe the moſt cruel and inhuman of all tyrannies. Such is the caſe of our preſent government, and muſt remain ſo, as long as the India Company holds its exiſtence.

If it is neceſſary to hold poſſeſſions in India; and which, no doubt, it is; what can be the reaſon, the whole buſineſs of thoſe poſſeſſions ſhould not be managed by the nation? The nation is obliged to ſupport and protect them, and conſequently the trade ought to be free and general. There is no argument in reaſon or common ſenſe againſt it; on the contrary, there is every reaſon in ſupport of it, why it ſhould be ſo; therefore I will not inſult the underſtandings of men

ſo

ſo much as to argue upon principles, which have ſuch obvious good for their end; but moſt ſtrenuouſly adviſe you to uſe your warmeſt exertions to prevent the renewal of a charter, which has, for its object; the monopoly of trade, the aggrandiſement of individuals at the expence of induſtry, merit, and talents, to the excluſion of the immutable rights and privileges of almoſt all the nation, to the exerciſe of the moſt wicked, and deteſtible deſpotiſm and peculation, that was ever practiſed over millions of our unprotected fellow-creatures, and tending to corrupt and poiſon the firſt principles of our own conſtitution, by its example and influence. The period is haſtening, when the ſubject of its renewal will be agitated; look to it, it is one of the main links on which our future fate (in a great meaſure) as a free and flouriſhing people hangs. It is from our interference, from our keen and earneſt remonſtrances, that this dangerous and odious monopoly can be expected to expire. It is a monſter under the controul of government, as dangerous to our liberties as it is noxious to our intereſt.

Let us next look into the Courts of Juſtice. What a combination of myſtery, perplexity,

and even abſurdity *, does our whole code of juriſprudence preſent? Caſt but your eyes over the libraries of profeſſional men in that ſcience, and you muſt ſuppoſe them either prodigies in nature, to be able to comprehend ſuch a quantity of matter, or that the whole ſyſtem is more calculated to perplex mankind, and even veterans in the law themſelves, than to promote the government and protection of men, which is the real caſe.

Advocates for this incongruous ſyſtem, in vain tell me, that theſe contain authorities, and preſcriptible forms which were enacted, ages paſt, by the wiſdom of our admired anceſtors,

* It is a diſcouraging conſideration, that, in every nation in Europe, men are ſubjected to a multiplicity of civil and political laws which they do not underſtand. England is not exempted from the general misfortune. 1. In criminal laws, all that does not relate to actual proceſs, is as complicated and as obſcure as in any other nation. 2. Its civil laws are a *chef d'œuvre* of juridicial ſubtilty, and prove how defective this boaſted conſtitution is, which has not even thought of reforming this abuſe. 3. Its laws of commerce, manufactures, and finance, do not fall ſhort in complication and irrationality of thoſe of any nation upon earth. 4. Its political legiſlation is not exempt from this defect, and the late contention reſpecting the Weſtminſter election (that is reſpecting the ſubject, the moſt important to the liberty of the people) is a ſtriking proof of it.

*M. Condorcet*, Life of *M. Turgot*.

and

and are grown venerable in the archives of Engliſh liberty, that palladium of all ſublunary felicity. No man more warmly admires the virtue, courage, and wiſdom of thoſe immortal ſages than I do, and in acknowledging this ſentiment I feel a glow of gratitude for the ineſtimable bleſſings we, their progeny, enjoy from their heroiſm, fortitude, and manly perſeverance, in the eſtabliſhment of thoſe unalienable privileges, which led to the aggrandiſement of this country, illumined Europe; and, in time no doubt, will ſpread the bleſſing over the whole habitable globe.

Should ſuch a queſtion be aſked, I ſhould briefly anſwer, that the then ſtate of civilization did not admit of all the poſſible perſpicuity, being given to their forms and laws, which the perfection of the object required, that they never could have had it in idea, that theſe forms and laws were not to be made more and more explicit and perfect, in the progreſſion of time, as experience ſhould point out the utility of alteration, inſtead of being more perplexed by multifarious caſes and contradictory deciſions. It is true, this perplexity is not peculiar to England; it exiſts even in America, almoſt in as an extenſive a degree; it paſſed the Atlantic with the firſt

ſettlers

ſettlers of that country, and they have either not had time, or induſtry to amend them. Do not miſtake, and ſuppoſe, it is from any good opinion they have of the perfection of the ſyſtem, or that they fear, by moving one ſtone of the work to undermine the beautiful and magnificent fabric. They allow the edifice to be ſublime, but Gothic; and have long ſince, I have been informed from good authority, (particularly in the ſtate of Virginia,) had it in contemplation to crumble it, and erect upon its moveleſs foundation, a modern and ſimple ſtructure, calculated for the comfort and happineſs of their citizens, and not let it ſtand merely for the veneration which it has acquired from the celebration of the brighteſt talents, and the admiration of ages, while the ſupport of its different orders require ſo many legions of ſophiſts to explain them, which the obſcurity of their heads, or the turpitude of their hearts have rendered unintellegible even to themſelves, and has perverted the inſtitution from the ſolemn and ſacred purpoſe of protection and ſecurity of perſons and property, to that of ſupporting a ſet of men (with the exception which are allowed to all general rules) without principle, benevolence, or even common honeſty. And who have, as it were, acquired a ſurreptitious

influence

influence in the affairs of life, as odious as it is injurious.

You have only to compare the deciſions of our Courts of Common Law, to ſee the various and different determinations in ſimilar caſes, which is among the ſmalleſt of the evils reſulting from the preſent mode of adminiſtering juſtice. In how many inſtances has the unprincipled guardian and executor violated with impunity * the care of his ward, and branded the name with infamy, which would be a diſgrace to an uncivilized country; and thereby tranſmitting examples which tend to multiply enormities and wickedneſs! In how many inſtances has the indigent, but honeſt creditor, pined in want, and miſerably beheld an infant family famiſh before his eyes, or driven to deſperation and proſtitution, and, the bloſſoms of his tendereſt hopes, withered never to bloom again, for the want of power, to bring a wealthy debtor to juſtice, in a caſe which is rendered doubtful, by the ſubtilty, which has been inſidiouſly

* Laws ſhould make men reſponſible for every truſt. An executor can defend himſelf for delinquency at the expence of the heir or legatee, which is an encouragement to fraud.

practiſed

practiſed upon his integrity, and unſuſpicious nature; and which difficulty proceeds not ſo much from the laws, as from the multiplied forms, and conſequent obſcurity to men not converſant with them, which is the caſe with few or none, except men of the profeſſion.

Look into the different priſons of the metropolis; and, indeed, throughout the kingdom, and you will ſee the profuſion, riot, and wanton extravagance, in which many unprincipled men live, who are confined for debt, while the juſt creditors are, perhaps, ſtarving: thus is a priſon converted into aſylums for fraud, rapine, and villainy. Do not believe this is unavoidable from the nature of all government. It is the abuſe of government, or the imperfection of our laws, and forces conviction in the breaſts of all honeſt men, of the neceſſity of a general reform.

To go no farther back than a year, or little more, in the caſe of John Luxford, which gave riſe (or rather was an argument made uſe of by Mr. Fox) to the bill brought forward concerning trials in caſes of libels and information, in the nature of *quo warranto*, and you

will find ample reaſon to believe it is high time a reviſion of our whole code ſhould be made.

True, Mr. Fox was permitted to bring in a bill for the reform of the abuſe of trials for libels, and which paſſed the Houſe of Commons; but what was its fate in the Houſe of Lords? Poſtponed for reading to a period when it was notorious to the whole kingdom, nay promulged! that Parliament would be prorogued before the time, acting, as it were, in defiance of the moſt lively hopes of the nation. Did that look as if that Houſe ſeriouſly believed the abuſes complained of were ſo alarming as to require their immediate attention? Did it not carry more the appearance of a diſpoſition to procraſtinate, until the flagrant injuſtice done to Luxford, and the conſtitution, ſhould in a degree be forgotten, when the ruthleſs T——, like a nipping froſt upon a ſprouting infant plant, would blaſt the fair germ in embryo? This may be a premature conjecture; but as it is my intention only to ſpeak of things as they appear, and not to aim at being thought prophetic, I ſhall be moſt agreeably diſappointed, ſhould this very valuable bill paſs without mutilation.

As to authorities I will ſay nothing; but will quote the opinion of Mr. Fox reſpecting them: "He was perfectly aware," he ſaid, "that in matters of law, as indeed in all "other matters, great authorities were argu-"ments; but authorities, great as they might "be, muſt ſome time or other claſh with rea-"ſon; and if the authorities were clear on "one ſide, and reaſon on the other, it would "produce the greateſt of all miſchiefs; for "reaſon muſt triumph, and the effect would "be, that it would deſtroy in future all reve-"rence for authority." Such already is the caſe with great part of the authorities, which ſupport the preſent ſyſtem of juriſprudence.

I feel here the moſt lively propenſity to pay a due tribute of praiſe to this great man's virtues and abilities; but his eulogium will always be found much more beautiful and elegant in that fame which his juſtly admired and ſplendid talents have acquired him, than in the moſt laboured panegyric that could be made. I will content myſelf with recommending to you to read over and over again without prejudice, and endeavour to think with energy upon his whole political opinions—compare their conſiſtency, and if you do not ſecretly bluſh, and involuntarily ſay,

"We

" We never deſerved ſuch diſintereſted and " ſupereminent abilities for our ſupport," I fear there will be little probability of renovating the decayed vigour of your underſtandings.

It ſhould appear from the manner in which he has been treated as a political character in his country, that his depth and comprehenſive views for public good never were rightly underſtood. He has laboured inceſſantly for the general welfare of mankind, which I will venture to prove is the particular good of Engliſhmen, and muſt be rewarded by poſterity with the name of the brighteſt luminary that ever gilded the political horizon of Great Britain.

We have been faſtidious enough ſometimes to object to his private character, at others to his ambition. It would have been better to have been a little more wiſe; " a death-bed re- " pentance ſeldom reaches to reſtitution." We have no time to looſe; let us atone for the ſacrilege we have committed upon the holy altars of liberty, by returning thoſe gifts which nature beſtowed upon that fair deity at the creation, and of which we have ſo ſhamefully robbed her.

Is it neceſſary for a man to pray aloud to prove himſelf a good Chriſtian? Does virtue conſiſt in form, or chaſtity in being coy, and robed in white? Reflect in time! It is poſſible to "purloin a man even from himſelf;" and I am clear in the opinion that the checks Mr. Fox has met with in the promulgation of his political ſentiments, from a miſinformed public, have frequently ſtifled in him the moſt manly and wiſe opinions—opinions calculated for the extenſion of public good and general felicity.

If we expect the full play of a man's talents we muſt give him our confidence, and not capriciouſly withdraw it whenever his ſentiments do not flow immediately in uniſon with ours. Conſider, that the changing of the ſyſtem of a government, in however ſmall a degree, requires the moſt refined delicacy, and the moſt adroit management. Every thing ſubſtantial is to be preſerved, while what is peccant muſt be removed, ſo as not to touch the key-ſtone of the edifice; and while the mouldering parts are removing, the fabric muſt acquire a ſymmetry or proportion which indicates the durability and the beauty of the ſtructure, and which will then ſtand to arreſt the admiration of unborn ages,

and

and leave an everlaſting monument of the prudence, wiſdom, and equity of a Britiſh legiſlature. Where are we to place this confidence but in the head and heart of a man, who has given ſuch repeated and wonderful proofs of capacity, integrity, and true love for his country. To the moſt extraordinary natural genius for legiſlative buſineſs that any human being ever poſſeſſed, to a life devoted from an early period to public buſineſs, is added, in Mr. Fox, the applauſes of the admiring world. Would he, in ſuch an elevated ſituation which almoſt deifies a mortal, ſully that proud diſtinction by baſely betraying the people's or his countries' intereſt? No: he that can think ſo for a moment, muſt be a ſtranger to that animating fire, which warms the breaſt of a real patriot or good man.

Let me beſeech you to examine incontinently the decayed and unwiſe parts of our inſtitutions. Every thing human requires amendment; what was ſalutary and proper five centuries ago, may not be ſo at the preſent day. Freedom is ever ſtriding towards perfection; " every uſeful truth will one day " be generally known, and univerſally adopted. " Old errors will by degrees be annihilated,

" and

" and replaced by new truths. This pro-
" greſs always advancing, from age to age,
" has no bounds aſcertainable by the actual
" ſtate of knowledge." Do not let us retard its progreſſion, but rather by our aid accelerate its divine completion. You have only to look at the abuſes to be ſtruck with horror. How many lonely, indigent, but virtuous characters, languiſh in ſecret, while thouſands of idle, pampered, flatterers, riot in the extreme of voluptuouſneſs, paid for at the expence of the honeſt, induſtrious part of the community? How many of our moſt upright and meritorious characters are deprived of privileges in common with their fellow-citizens, and thereby in a great degree made aliens in a land of freedom? While the men, to whom we aſſign our truſt, make a ſale of their time, (for labour they have none,) without anſwering one of the purpoſes for which they were delegated; thereby rendering the whole deſign of our glorious and boaſted conſtitution a mere mockery, and ſubject of ridicule to all the world, in open violation of that ſocial and ſacred contract, which men entered into for the extenſion of civilization, and the bleſſings of ſociety, reſerving to themſelves that political liberty, which conſiſts in the right which every member of a ſtate has, of arriving

at public honors, and which they could not ſurrender, without ſigning the indenture of their own bondage; and this, after the cauſe which led to thoſe deprivations has ceaſed to exiſt, after political wiſdom and ſcience has eradiated the European hemiſphere, and ſoftened, in many parts of its domains, the minds of the different ſects, or denominations of religion, and man into one harmonious order of beings. Thus keeping up a ſpecies of political deſpotiſm, more cruel than the tyranny of the moſt arbitrary monarch upon earth, by making a diſtinction of men, and fixing an obliquity upon their characters, which deſtroys the better half of the human ſoul; and holding out temptations to the violators of conſcience, and perpetrators of perjury, by ſhewing them places of profit, which the rules preſcribed by law does not admit of their poſſeſſing conſiſtently with their religious ſentiments *: but I flatter myſelf, the majority of thinking men will allow, that it is high time to annihilate the diſtinction of privileges, and thereby better the condition, or at leaſt ceaſe to corrupt the morals of one claſs of men, and thus gradually correct thoſe abuſes which have inſenſibly crept into every

* Men who have not ſenſibility enough to diſtinguiſh the ſubtilty of this tyranny, muſt remain incorrigible.

order

order of ſociety from the want of preciſion in laws. A community, to be well regulated, muſt have not only good laws, but they ſhould be perſpicuous, and executed with exactneſs.

I ſhall here take my leave of this ſubject, with recommending to you, to inſtil into the minds of your children that they are Britons, that they are by nature free, and that an exiſting compact is only to be regarded ſo long as it ſecures equal liberty. Teach them to deſpiſe tergiverſation, meanneſs, perfidy, and falſhood. You may have taken the Decalogue, and told them they muſt not kill, nor bear falſe witneſs againſt their neighbours, &c.; but tell them as citizens, who wiſh to be reſpected, that they muſt make themſelves uſeful to ſociety, that it is not ſufficient to honour their father and mother, to deſerve the honours and rewards of their country. Let them know that virtue has its rewards, and vice its puniſhments; and that the moſt contemptible of all animal beings, is man without friends, or reſpect. What creature is ſo deteſtible as a ſervile paraſite? What leads to more lamentable conſequences in ſuch a government as ours? What tyrant upon earth ever could ſupport his luſt of power, for any length of

time, that was not ſurrounded by ſycophants? Deſpotiſm of every ſort is odious, and it is by an energy, or proper way of thinking, that the dæmon muſt be driven from the reſidence of men. It is not ſufficient to know this; it is neceſſary to feel it; and by a manly and decided conduct, to prove to flatterers of every ſort, that they muſt firſt merit the good opinion of their countrymen, before they can expect to be intitled to their truſt, confidence, or eſteem.

## TO THE
## HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Gentlemen,

THE theory of conſtitutions which ought, in every ſtate, to be the baſis of government, has ſo often been diſcuſſed by men of firſt rate talents and abilities, that it would be a work of ſupererogation for me to attempt to ſay any thing new upon the ſubject; beſides, it is my opinion, that practice and experience of the operations of government, after the theory has received that light which the preſent æra affords, are the moſt likely to point out what is moſt conducive to the happineſs of mankind.

The advantages of liberty in this country have been ſufficiently experienced to be loved, and cheriſhed, as the moſt auſpicious gift we enjoy from nature. The Britiſh conſtitution has ſecured many of its bleſſings, while almoſt every other country in Europe has groaned under the chains of deſpotiſm. That we owe this in a great meaſure to the conſtitution, as well as the temper of Britons, is moſt certain. The combination of its powers, whether they were the effect of chance, or whether they originated in deſign, ſeems to have been calculated for the happieſt end, that the ſtate of Europe would admit of at the period of its origin. If it had no ſpecific baſis beſides *Magna Charta*, until the *Habeas Corpus* act paſſed, and the happy Revolution 1688, but the temper of men, that is ſufficient demonſtration that it was a government upon principles emanating from the conſent and ſenſe of the nation; and had the peculiar functions of its different powers been more accurately defined at the Revolution, perhaps the proſperity of this country would have been more effectually ſecured: but it ſtill would have required experience to know on which ſide the ſcale would preponderate.

We

We have now experienced the influence of government, (if not conſtitutionally in all caſes, ſuch as the conſtitution admitted of with impunity to the miniſters,) for ſomething more than a century; we have been a flouriſhing people under this government, with all its abuſes, it is true. But you muſt recollect, that, in the progreſſion of arts, and civilization, there is a point, that when arrived at, increaſes in that ratio; which, if not obſtructed, hurries to perfection. The remains of barbariſm were wearing rapidly away; the long civil wars, which had ſo often deſolated whole countries, and thrown back the arts of invention and induſtry were over. The contention about religion and prerogative were finally ſettled; the nation unſaddled with debt; the people ſecured by the Bill of Rights, in perſon and property, quietly purſued their buſineſs under the ſpreading wings of a ſettled government; though long and expenſive wars ſucceeded, faction divided government at home, infamous proſtitution of principles and morals introduced a ſpecies of venal corruption among the repreſentatives of the nation, and a heavy national debt, as it was then thought, accumulated; ſtill the people in ſecurity, with acclamations of joy, contributed their hard-earned premiums for the

ſupport of that government from which they had derived ſo many bleſſings. But what has been done for thoſe generous ſubjects in return? Parliament has been voted ſeptennial, in violation of the conſtitution. An open fraud has been committed upon the franchiſes of the nation; places of favour and profit have been multiplied; the army has been increaſed; abuſes, inſtead of having been removed have been heaped one upon another, almoſt without number; uſeleſs and ruinous wars have been undertaken, to gratify the caprice, ambition, or tyranny of a miniſter holding the purſe-ſtrings, which *the theory* of our conſtitution puts in your hands; but which in fact, from the deteſtable practice of bribery, has too long been at the command of the ſervants of the Crown; they have found no obſtacle to the gratification of paſſions, not more infamous or derogatory to them as men, than ſhameful and diſgraceful to the nation. But it is to you, Gentlemen, as the inqueſt of the nation, and the guardians of our rights and property, we looked for repreſentation and ſecurity. What has been the conſequence? A train of prodigality, contempt, and ſacrilege has been practiſed in violation of that ſacred contract which every man ought to reverence,

reverence, and not to *reſent* the *abuſe of*, which is *daſtardly and baſe.*

Has the influence of the crown grown ſo *Herculian* that you cannot reſiſt its powers? If that is the caſe, why not abridge it? The end of all government is the happineſs of the whole community, and whenever it does not ſecure that, it is a bad government, and it is time it *was altered.*

A debt of nearly 300,000,000 is a frightful proof of moſt ſhameful abuſes.—From whence has this originated, but from the frequent, uſeleſs wars, which have been undertaken in the courſe of the laſt half century. The moſt dangerous and oppreſſive of which, it has been agreed on by all parties, was not the war of the nation, but rather an unprovoked war upon one half the empire; and therefore to be preſumed all the principled part of your houſe were equally oppoſed to it: ſtill money was granted, and the war continued, until the nation was almoſt in a ſtate of ruin. But the misfortune is, too many Senators have not repreſented the people, they have merely repreſented themſelves, and have been cyphers to the nation.

Mr.

Mr. Fox ſaid, I think it was upon the ſubject of libels, " He thought he ſaw amidſt " all the minuter parts of the conſtitution, two " important ſprings upon which it turned, viz. " the preſentation of the people through the " medium of the Houſe of Commons, and the " juridical power of the people through the " medium of juries; and it appeared to him, " that even although the other parts of the ſyſ- " tem fell into diſorder; yet if theſe main " ſprings were preſerved in full vigour, the " reſt might be repaired; but if theſe two " ſprings gave way, all the reſt muſt fall com- " pleatly into deſtruction." Now there appears to be but one poſſible way for the people to be repreſented, but that is a very ſimple one. Suffer them to have repreſentatives; for while boroughs are bought and ſold, or members returned to ſit in the Houſe of Commons, who are the mere tools of the miniſter, or of private individuals, while populous towns are not entitled to repreſentation, (to ſay nothing of the undue influence which is made uſe of at elections,) it is impoſſible the people's intereſt or rights can be repreſented, or guarded through the medium of your houſe, while the preſent unnatural and unjuſt ſyſtem exiſts. And as that juridical power is not ſecured to the people through

through the medium of juries, it is neceſſary for you to ſet inſtantly about changing that part of the ſyſtem which ſeems to threaten us with a general earthquake. The truſt is in you; " the fee-ſimple in us."

Government is not merely a " contrivance " of human wiſdom;" the very name implies protection of perſons and properties, ſecurity to our civil, religious, and political liberties, and encouragement to all men alike, as far as the nature of human inſtitutions will admit. Government will always find ſecurity from the equity of its miniſtry; and whenever it departs from that equity, and ſeeks to gratify ambition, aggrandize individuals, or indulge impotence, arrogance, or caprice, at the expence either of our property or general liberty, it is both ſhameful and ignominious for us to bear it without having recourſe to the means neceſſary to cure the evil.

Abuſes which grow out of the conſtitution, oblige us to have recourſe to firſt principles; and as you are the oſtenſible repreſentatives of the nation, we call firſt upon you in the name of truth, prudence, and that ſolemn and ſacred love for your country, which every man owes in common for birthright, to uſe

every

every means in your power to reſtore to us the long abuſed privileges of Engliſhmen—privileges not more eſſential to our future welfare, than to your glory and general comfort, as well as to the felicity of the whole Britiſh empire — privileges that have been ſurreptitiouſly taken from us in æras of national delirium, and which love for the tranquillity of our country prevented us from arreſting and claiming as the original owners. Satisfied in the idea that the period would arrive when a juſt and wiſe Parliament would reſtore them in all their priſtine purity, we have truſted like a generous creditor, whoſe love for ſome dear relation has, in the midſt of his prodigality and folly, found ſomething in him to admire, and patiently waited for reſtitution until he has diſcovered him on the brink of ruin.

Freedom is ſpreading over the world, and liberty, like an electrical ſhock, has rouſed the dormant ſenſes of men to action. They have beheld with manly indignation and ſhame the broken fetters which had ſo long aggravated their captivity; and ſpurning little intereſts and paltry prejudices have appropriated uſeleſs wealth to national maladies. The conſequence will be, renovated vigor, teeming

proſperity, and flouriſhing nations, without the dread of thoſe dangerous abuſes which lead to ſervitude, contempt, and ruin.

How are you to account to your conſtituents when they tell you, that while half the world have been leſſening their domeſtic debts, encouraging agriculture, arts, and commerce, you have been increaſing your national expences, continuing the diſtinction of odious privileges and charters, ſuffering vaſt tracts of land, capable of being fertilized, to lie waſte and uncultivated; thouſands of laborious induſtrious poor to languiſh upon their hard-earned pittance, from the high price of every kind of proviſions, and ſupporting a ſyſtem of government and politics, not more dangerous than it is repugnant to common ſenſe. In direct oppoſition to the ſentiments of reaſon, to the ſentiments of the moſt admired authors of the preſent age, and to the convincing arguments of experience, which have for their ſupport the intire approbation of enlightened ſenſible men in every part of the world.

Is no argument, or reaſon to break that faſcinating charm, which lulls your ſenſes to ſleep in the lap of foul venality, and gluts your

depraved appetites in the gorgeous pleaſures of a court? Call to your aid a remembrance of the glorious ſtruggles which your illuſtrious anceſtors have made for liberty; recollect the horrid civil war which the follies of the ill-fated Charles brought upon his country, which ended with his own deſtruction, and the overthrow of the government, when anarchy was prevented by a bold uſurper, whoſe military fame gave him a power to ſupport the ſemblance of a government, thus preventing a general wreck which the prudence of a leſs imperious and intrepid conqueror could not have done. A nation rebelling againſt a government, and not againſt a King, will not be ſo eaſily appeaſed. To calculate upon contingencies is folly. To wait until the gathering ſtorm burſts over your heads would be ſtupid. Look on every ſide, and you will ſee cauſe for complaint. A national debt accumulating; the neceſſaries of life riſing in price; the premiums of trade leſſening; the poor increaſing; our manufactories moving to other countries; and no means are made uſe of by government to avert the growing calamity: but on the contrary, a conduct is obſerved which ſeems intended to accelerate the direful cataſtrophe.

More than twenty years ſince, Lord Chatham thought that it was neceſſary to "*infuſe a portion of new health into the conſtitution to enable it to bear its infirmities.*" What would be the opinion of that great man had he lived at the preſent day, after the repeated, ſhameful, and flagrant abuſes, that have been practiſed ſince he retired from the ſtage of this world, and ſince the complexion of the affairs of men has ſo materially changed?

"However diſtinguiſhed, by rank or property, in the rights of freedom, we are all "equal as we are all Engliſhmen; the leaſt "conſiderable man among us has an intereſt "equal to the proudeſt nobleman, in the "laws and conſtitution of his country, and is "equally called upon to make a generous "contribution in ſupport of them; whether it "be the heart to conceive, the underſtanding "to direct, or the hand to execute.*" How very much are the privileges of men abridged by the very nature of the preſent ſyſtem of repreſentation? (to ſay nothing of the abuſes). The qualifications to vote for a member of parliament, are unnatural in the extreme; without uniformity, or political wiſdom, for

* Junius.

JOHN JOHNSON Bibl Soc

their original object. Chartered inſtitutions had been made in times of anarchy, for the purpoſe of accommodation; at other times, as a matter of favour: and while freemen (as they are prepoſterouſly called) are intitled to a vote, a ſubſtantial and wealthy yeoman, or farmer, though a valuable member of ſociety, and belonging to that claſs of men, whoſe induſtry and care conſtitutes the baſes of riches of every country, is excluded from a ſuffrage in the choice of men delegated to guard and protect the liberties of a country.

This ſyſtem, which appears in a great meaſure to have been the effect of chance; or if it ever had an object, it has been continued long after that object ceaſed; and was, for a length of time, thought juſt in the eyes of the nation, from that ſacred regard in which they hold the pledges and engagements of their anceſtors; but it has been uſed by government as an effectual engine for its deſpotiſm. This repugnance to the diſſolution of engagements does the higheſt honour to that integrity which has acquired ſo much glory and pre-eminence to the name of Britons; and while in the end it was likely, in any way, to ſecure proſperity and fair adminiſtration,

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the ſyſtem was admired for its venerable age, and from having been practiſed by our immediate forefathers; but the imperfection is diſcovered; our confidence is loſt; ruin ſtares us in the face. We have examined the code of nature, and find that anceſtors have no right to bind their heirs for ever. Every government which runs counter to the end of its inſtitution (which is the happineſs, and not the miſery, of mankind) requires to be changed.

Mr. Burke, ſpeaking on the affairs of India, December 1, 1783, ſaid, "That all political "power which is ſet over men; that all pri- "vileges claimed or exerciſed in excluſion of "them, being wholly artificial, and, for ſo "much a derogation from the natural equa- "lity of mankind at large, ought to be ſome "way or other exerciſed ultimately for their "benefit. If, ſaid he, continuing, this is "true, with regard to every ſpecies of politi- "cal dominion, and every deſcription of com- "mercial privilege, none of which can be "original, and ſelf-derived rights, or grants "for the mere benefit of the holders, then "ſuch rights or privileges, or whatever elſe "you pleaſe to call them, are all, in the "ſtricteſt ſenſe, a truſt; and it is the nature "and eſſence of every truſt to be rendered ac-

"countable,

" countable, and even totally to ceaſe, when " it ſubſtantially varies from the purpoſes, " for which alone it could have a lawful " exiſtence."

How far the charters, or particular immunities, which have been granted at the different periods of our government, have ſubſtantially varied from the end or ſpirit of ſuch grants, I think muſt be ſufficiently obvious to every man willing to think, and candid enough to acknowledge the reſult of his thinking, without my dilating upon the ſubject. The reaſons of which variation are in common ſenſe, and its dangerous effects are to be found from daily experience.

I ſhould be glad to know from what analogy of thinking it can be expected, that a ſyſtem of government acting upon the ſame ſprings, is to produce more ſalutary effects than it has done heretofore. I preſume no man will be hardy enough to ſay, that our government has been in every degree a proſperous one; and that the frequent abuſes that have been committed, are not a derogation from the happineſs of the ſubject. Is it to be preſumed, that this country will produce greater, and better men than have yet ſat at

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the helm of affairs; or that their œconomy, and abilities for finance, will produce a ſyſtem by which national burthens will be removed? or is it poſſible that any man is capable of wiſhing, that the preſent ruinous meaſures may go on, until the debt is wiped away with a ſpunge? Let that happen when it will, (may Heaven avert ſo diſgraceful an event,) diſorder and anarchy will crumble the fabric of our conſtitution into nothing.

As this ſyſtem does not ſeem to promiſe more ſalutary effects in future, except to thoſe who may have conſulted aſtrologers, or have been furniſhed, in their delirious dreams, with a prepoſſeſſion that ſomething like a phænomenon will appear, whoſe ſupernatural faculties will ſave the nation, it can be in no wiſe preſumptuous, ſhould I attempt to examine candidly, and coolly, into the natural tendency of ſuch a government; not intirely as it has acted, but as it is moſt likely to operate in future; taking into conſideration the change of affairs in the different parts of the world, and the operations of the wheels of commerce clogged with the intereſt of nearly £.300,000,000, beſides the expences of government, which ſeem to be increaſing, be-

ſides a numerous royal family to ſupport, which, no doubt, will *ſtill increaſe* alſo.

England enjoys great natural advantages, and has hitherto poſſeſſed greater artificial one's from the comparative ſuperiority of her conſtitution. Maritime almoſt from nature, ſo that while her induſtrious inhabitants have acquired a ſuperiority over other countries, in the excellence and variety of her artificial productions, her navy has protected her commerce, and brought home riches from every part of the globe. Encouragement has been given to every art, and a career of victorious ſucceſſes have made her almoſt ſovereign miſtreſs of the world; the eclat of her fame, extended to every part of it, while teeming plenty, which overſpread the iſland, made us believe that our government was the moſt perfect that human wiſdom could invent, and that nature had created us ſuperior beings; we almoſt forgot partial diſtreſſes from the comparative miſeries of the people of other nations; and in this deluſion of perfection of our conſtitution, we bore with the abuſes of our government, flattered with the pleaſing hope, that every new Miniſter would introduce a more wholeſome ſyſtem, until that diſaſterous war of

America,

America, brought with it ſuch a load of evils, that we began to reflect upon the nature of all governments, and found, in the very heart of our own, principles calculated to engender ambition; principles dangerous to the peace of every country, and ever counteracting the firſt, and moſt important, end of civilization, which is peace and proſperity. It is the prerogative of the ſupreme executive power to to make war and peace at pleaſure. To diſſolve, prorogue, and convene Parliament at will: And the Crown has alſo power to ſuborn and controul Parliament, by the many places of honor and profit in its gift; and by the ſupport of chartered companies, and unequal repreſentation.

This diſcovery, the objects of which have produced ſo many miſchiefs, we neither have, nor can have, any ſecurity againſt; while the government remains in its preſent ſtate, national burthens are liable to be increaſed. A war of five years, if not more, than uſually ſucceſsful, would in all probability cauſe a national bankruptcy. Expences of every kind increaſe in a rapid proportion; when the charges upon the neceſſaries of life, and the prices of raw materials are as enormous as the preſent government expences and intereſt of

our debt neceſſarily make them. Examine for a moment the riſe and increaſe of the preſent debt. Somewhere about a century ſince, the firſt part was incurred, the different wars, &c. had made it about 46,954,623*l.* in the year 1739; after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748, it amounted to 73,293,313*l.* a war of nine years only added 31,338,689*l.* at the commencement of the war in 1755, the funded debt amounted to 72,289,673*l.* at the cloſe of that war it already amounted to 122,603,336*l.* Mark the rapid increaſe in the twenty years incluſive, from 1763 until 1783, when it was ſuppoſed to amount to 270,000,000*l.*

The conſequence muſt be, even without the addition of any further burthens; that, if the debt is not leſſened by ſome means, our manufactures and trade muſt be ruined.

America is riſing rapidly in different branches of manufactures; ten or twenty years, which is of ſo little conſequence in the progreſs of things in an old ſettled country, produces a vaſt change in an infant one like America, where the inhabitants are found to double every twenty or five-and-twenty years, where the price of proviſions

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is little more than one-third of what it is in England; and where the price of a large proportion of raw materials for manufacturing is ſtill lower, which more than counterbalances the inconvenience ariſing from the dearneſs of labour.

The orders from that country this year were not ſo conſiderable for many articles as formerly, and will conſequently be proportionably leſs every year, while our trade is ſo burthened. Our artificers, no longer encouraged at home, but inticed abroad, are migrating, and will continue to migrate both to America and France, until the low ebb of commerce, no longer able to ſupport the induſtrious fair trader, clamours and diſcontent will burſt the fetters of abuſe, and every horror of civil diſcord will expiate for the wrongs of injured citizens. The ſafety of your property will not be more precarious than that of your perſons.

The nation has for a long time been more ſupported by former acquired wealth, than by latter proſperity; accumulated treaſures have ſupported national demands; and while the coffers, which were filled with the earnings of years of induſtry, have been drained, the lethargy of the nation has been miſtaken

for a flouriſhing condition; the greateſt deluſion which can be practiſed upon a people in their ſenſes.

The middling claſs of tradeſmen, who are the main props of commerce, can with difficulty exiſt from the great demands for taxes, the very high price of the neceſſaries of life, and the comparative ſmall profits upon their buſineſs. Every ſpecies of fraud has been invented by the poverty of buſineſs. While laws have been multiplied, the evil has been extended. Crimes originate more from neceſſity than from the natural turpitude of men. It is the wiſdom of government more to prevent, than to puniſh crimes.

Examine into our Eaſt and Weſt-India trade, and you will find the former is not more baneful to the true ſpirit of commerce than it is ruinous to the nation. The advantages of the latter have been upon the decline for many years, as was ſufficiently ſtated to the Houſe of Commons, by the ſugar refiners, in the year 1781, proving its rapid decline for the then laſt eight years; and, in that year, which was the moſt miſerable of the whole in profit, we had the additional iſlands of Tobago, St. Euſtatius, St. Martin's,

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and the ſettlements of Demaurary, and Eſſequibo, and our fleet protected that trade. Examine the ſtate of the ſame trade ſince that period*, and you will find, that until the diſturbances in the French iſlands

* Brown Muſcovado ſugars, which in 1755 were worth only 26*s.* or 27*s.*, in the winter of 1776 ſold at 50*s.*; ſince that period they have ſometimes ſold for 60*s.* and upwards; in June, 1779, at the amazing price of 70*s.* During the war which commenced in 1755 they ſold from 32*s.* to 38*s. per cwt.*

*Stated by the ſugar-refiners to Parliament in* 1781.

From 1783 to 1787, the ſame ſugars averaged about 48*s. per cwt.*; at preſent the price is 80*s.* As this ſtatement is undoubtedly juſt, it clearly proves that the price has been gradually riſing; and that the preſent high price is not intirely owing to the inſurrections in San Domingo; it indubitably originates from the nature of the monopoly, as it is notorious, that there was at one time this ſeaſon more ſugar in London, than the importers could find warehouſes to ſtore.

It appears by a note annexed to the reaſons, ſtated to Houſe of Commons, by the ſame, for repealing ſeveral acts of parliament reſpecting duties paid on foreign or prize-ſugar, "that a few years previous to that date, "viz. 1781, there were an hundred and fifty-nine ſugar "houſes at work in London;—and then about one hun-"dred and ſix houſes, many of which were to let;" and this number has ſince declined conſiderably. That upon what principle of policy the ſyſtem of Weſt-India affairs is continued, after it has obviouſly tended to leſſen the revenue, transfer the manufactory of ſugar-refining abroad, is inconceivable, but as it is another prop to favouritiſm and patronage.

it has been little more productive. The odious ſyſtem of ſlavery, as repugnant to the feeling of humanity as that monopoly is hurtful to the trade, in a few years (when the reſtoration of order takes place in the French government; and, when it recovers from the devaſtations, which have been produced by an injured people thirſting for freedom) will reduce it to a moſt deplorable condition. The high price of ſugar, and the diſhonourable means by which it is produced, have already determined thouſands of reſpectable humane people to debar themſelves the uſe of it; their ſympathetic minds deteſting luxuries, wrongfully obtained, however delicious.

This may be a ſubject of mirth and ridicule to ſome people, but it may end ſeriouſly with the nation. When the exceſſive charges of government, and the low premiums of buſineſs, with the decline of manufactories and commerce, forces a rigid œconomy upon the induſtrious part of the nation, and then hardly enables them to live, a government becomes more oppreſſive than the patience of freemen will ſubmit to, without demanding the removal of abuſes. Nothing can be clearer to common ſenſe than that the preſent growing diſtreſſes, ſo far as the proſperity

rity of the country is concerned, originate from the exceſſive demands made by government; and, that while the preſent ſyſtem is continued, the demands muſt be the ſame; and admitting we are not to have the rareeſhew of armament over again, there does not ſeem to be any means within the comprehenſion, or at leaſt within the diſpoſition of government, by which theſe demands are to be lowered.

From the cloſe of the American war until the year 1787, when the Dutch affair happened, this country enjoyed profound repoſe; every exertion had been made, and though the Miniſter boaſted of a ſurplus, ſtill it appears a matter of doubt, whether or not the expenditure did not exceed the receipt of thoſe years? The ſame tranquility exiſted from that epocha until the rupture with Spain, a ſpace of three years more; government was perfectly ſettled, the Miniſter had every thing his own way, the affairs of France were in an unſettled ſtate, a commercial treaty had been entered into which gave this country every aſſiſtance and benefit that trade would afford. The Americans, ſcarcely clear of their ſwaddling clothes, and not recovered from that idleneſs which the profeſſion

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of arms always produces, felt their predilections return for the manufactures of the mother country, and almoſt every foreign article, which they uſed, was ſent from England until the whole ſpecie, which had been carried there by both the Engliſh and French was re-exported, and centered with us. When they no longer had credit, or means to purchaſe, neceſſity then ſet them to work; ſtill it does not appear, that with all theſe advantages, government ever ſeriouſly thought that it was poſſible to reduce the debt. What will be the natural conſequence ſince circumſtances have changed ſo much in favour of America and France? Clearly, that the trade of this country muſt be ſtill more oppreſſed, if a remedy is not immediately applied.

I muſt beg leave to aſk, What ſecurity the Conſtitution, as it now is, affords for ſuch a remedy? What ſecurity have we in the Conſtitution, for a juſt diſcharge of the duty of Parliament? We firſt appeal to you; and, if you cannot contrive one, we muſt appeal to a higher power, the will of the many. Your welfare and dignity would as much depend upon it, as our proſperity, was it poſſible to detach Parliament from the people. What ſecurity is there that Parliament

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ſhall be annually aſſembled, except that the ſupplies are voted only for a year? Thus leaving the moſt important tranſactions to neceſſity; and, inſtead of meeting at regular and ſtated periods, eſtabliſhed by law, being ſubject not only to variation, according to the caprice and humour of Miniſters, but preferring a government of faſtidious changes to a permanent ſyſtem; thus ſubjecting the convenience of a whole nation to the indulgence or whim of a Miniſter, and giving ſtrangers a convincing proof, that ours is more a government of temper than a government upon fixed and certain principles.

Was not Parliament prorogued in the laſt ſeſſion, at a time when a moſt important conſtitutional bill had paſſed unanimouſly through the Houſe of Commons, thereby the privileges of the people ſuſpended; nay, even trampled upon, by the arbitrary deciſions, in caſes of trials for libels, by jury? Do not pretend to ſay, by way of apology for the Houſe of Lords, that was intirely the effect of neceſſity. Whenever did a juſt and equitable government ſuffer the liberty of one of its citizens to be endangered merely for its convenience? When did a moderate government act in contempt of the fondeſt

wiſhes of a collected empire? It was an indignity as groſs as its author is contemptible.

## TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

My Lords,

IT is the wiſdom of our admired conſtitution to be compoſed of three parts; the executive by a chief magiſtrate, the legiſlative by two Houſes of Parliament, with ſome privileges we know in common, others peculiar to each. The ſupreme judicature reſides in yours. Your births, your dignified eſtates, and hereditary diſtinctions, would induce us to believe you were above every meanneſs; your particular eſſence is that of being a poiſe between the people and the Crown; and that potential fountain of juſtice, which ought to reſide with you, promiſes that emanation of wiſdom and equity, which alone can render a diſtinction of men bearable, who are by nature equal.

While theſe expected effects flow from your deciſions, you will be regarded as a neceſſary branch of the legiſlature; but ſhould you *continue* to deviate from it materially, enquiries will be made into the nature and ſupport of your diſtinctions, which are pretty generally

generally known already to be entirely owing to the continuation of primogeniture ſhip. The dangers flowing from ſuch a ſyſtem have been too fatally experienced; for while your eſtates go wholly to the eldeſt branch of your families, you are obliged to look for appointments in the gift of government for your younger ſons; the very acceptance of which amounts to a ſale of your political opinions; and this is the ſource of all our calamities.

It is not ſufficient, that while one-fourth of the nation are baſking in the radiance of the perfection of arts, that another fourth ſhould be miſerable, while the other half are ſcarcely comfortable. No, my Lords; this is not the end of government. Conſult your own feelings as men, and your dignity as Peers; for a moment, then aſk, and let thoſe noble ſentiments, which you are ſuppoſed to inherit, if they can, anſwer in the affirmative.

It is not my intention to trouble your Lordſhips with a diſſertation upon the ſubject of abuſes, which have grown to ſo enormous a ſize. You have only to examine into the conduct of miniſters for the laſt twenty years, to feel, I preſume, the compleateſt conviction,

that, if they are ſuffered to go on, they muſt infallibly overthrow every thing ſubſtantial.

A new conſtruction may ariſe when hereditary diſtinctions will be no more: men of experience, and acknowledged talents may form a poiſe equally effectual without the dangers and unnatural ſyſtem of creating uſeleſs employments merely for proviſion for the younger branches of families of rank.

It is in the power of Parliament to prevent a general wreck. You are ſtill reſpected, my Lords, for the virtues of your forefathers, though we have beheld with indignation the ſpurious mixture which a ſacrifice of principle has produced, and lament that the only good to be expected from the nature of your political elevation, is perverted into a vehicle of contempt and abuſe.

The object of every government is the happineſs of the governed, to be equally and permanently diſpenſed, and whenever a government does not ſecure it, depend upon it, the people will have recourſe to firſt principles. You may for a time prevent it by what is called in ariſtocratical language, an efficient executive government, that is, by a phalanx of

officers, penſioners, and dependents, ſupported by an army.

A criminal can only bear a certain degree of torture without expiring: a free people will not expire. Whenever the laſh of abuſe touches the quick, their animation will be rouſed.

When we contemplate the name of a nobleman, we ſuppoſe there is ſomething ſuperior belonging to him; but what a degradation of thought, when we find him ſomething leſs than a man: prove, my Lords, to the Britiſh empire, and to the world, that you merit this diſtinction of rank; prove yourſelves the guardians of your countries' rights, and not acceſſaries to its wrongs; and teach Engliſhmen, in the renovation of their decayed, but glorious, conſtitution, to reverence your order by your intrepidity in their behalf; and while the ſplendour of your virtues gives a luſtre to your rank, continue to enjoy the blandiſhments which the magnitude of your fortunes affords you. It is not that we envy you, we want more ſubſtantial and ineſtimable gifts; we want only, my Lords, the reſtitution of our long abuſed privileges.

# TO THE KING.

SIR,

REVERENCE is due to a firſt magiſtrate, and decency to every gentleman, and while I obſerve both to your Majeſty, I flatter myſelf I ſhall neither incur your diſapprobation, or the cenſure of Engliſhmen.

The follies of youth, and the inexperience of a chief magiſtrate, to a certain degree are equally excuſable, particularly when a bad education has laid the foundation of their errors; it is then the governor and not the man who is to blame. Your Majeſty has hitherto found ample allowance in the generoſity of the nation for his former miſtaken and ruinous politics.

Educated as you were, under the influence of men whoſe politics were as tyrannic as their ſervility was ſhameful and odious, it was not much to be wondered at, that the firſt meaſures of your government bore ſo frightful a complexion. Devoted to domeſtic repoſe, as you were, which did honour to you as a huſband and as a father, it was equally to be expected that the deſpotiſm of your juvenile favourites

vourites would prevail. But after ſo inglorious a war as forced one half of your empire to revolt, and after incurring a moſt alarming and dangerous expence, with the final loſs of that half, ſomething, at leaſt, was to be expected from your age and experience. Still your Majeſty ſeems to have preferred his own tranquility to any exertion for the comforts and happineſs of your ſubjects, or to have miſtaken the means ne ceſſary to lead to that important end, while the ſame deplorable ſyſtem has been continued.

It is a ſtory told of one of the ancient kings of this country, " that to reprove the adula-
" tion of his courtiers, who endeavoured to
" perſuade him that he poſſeſſed more than
" human power, he cauſed himſelf to be
" ſeated in his royal robes on the ſea ſhore,
" and, in the preſence of his nobles, com-
" manding the ſwelling waves not to proceed,
" ſaying, Thou art part of my dominion,
" therefore preſume not to touch the robes of
" thy Lord;" but the ſea rolling its uſual courſe daſhed againſt him, upon which he ſuddenly roſe up, and declared, " How vain
" was the power of kings, and that He only
" deſerved that title, whoſe laws the heavens,
" the earth, and the ſea obey." I do not mean

mean to infer from this, that all kings are uſeleſs; on the contrary, while the forms of the conſtitution remain the ſame, the operations of government will require a firſt magiſtrate; and whether he is called King, or ſupreme magiſtrate, which is a relative term, can in fact produce no difference. But I have quoted it that your Majeſty may make it a ſubject of your reflection, and that it may ſtimulate you to turn your thoughts to the operations of nature; guard yourſelf againſt the practice of inſidious paraſites, and prepare your mind to aſſiſt as chief magiſtrate, and as one of the branches of the conſtitution, in removing thoſe abuſes, and amending thoſe defective parts of it, which experience, and the happy change of the times, prove ſufficiently to all good and candid men, is become neceſſary; which abuſes have been productive of ſo many miſchiefs, and which have ſerved no other purpoſe than to gratify the miſerable ambition of miniſters at the expence of our comfort, and, in a great meaſure, of the happineſs of the whole Britiſh empire, at the expence of your popularity and good name, heaping upon you abuſes and innuendo's which would degrade a private man, and which could not help to wound, in the moſt poignant manner, the ſenſibility of

every

every gentleman, and which are not more dangerous to the liberties of Engliſhmen, than they are to your Majeſty's crown.

To have addreſſed the people, and the two Houſes of Parliament upon this neceſſity, and to have omitted taking notice of the firſt magiſtrate, who is equally concerned with the nation, would have been as much an error in judgment, as it would have been diſreſpectful to the conſtitution and to you. The ſplendour of the Crown muſt always depend upon the proſperity of the nation; and the greateſt glory of a king muſt always be the love and regard of his people. If theſe decay, you muſt fall together; but national proſperity may be revived, when monarchy is no more.

There is an elevation in a firſt magiſtrate, ſupported with an annual revenue of 1,000,000 *l.* which ſeems a diſtinction ſufficient to gratify the ambition of any human being; and while that is ſuſceptible of being made permanent, and the happineſs and future welfare of the people are thereby ſecured, I cannot ſuppoſe any rational and intelligent being would heſitate a moment to uſe every means in their power that would facilitate the completion of ſo deſirable an end.

Your Majeſty has only to caſt your eyes over the many abuſes which have crept into government during your reign, to be made perfectly ſenſible of the cauſe of the many complaints which are daily made againſt government. You have only to examine and compare what has happened with what may happen again, to be ſatisfied of the dangerous diſorders growing out of the conſtitution.

If your Majeſty has been in a different habit of thinking, and which no doubt you have, and therefore have believed every thing which have been ſo violently complained of as abuſes, to be nothing more than the practice of the conſtitution, and which in no wiſe has been done, but for the honour and dignity of the Britiſh nation, I muſt candidly tell you, with every deference to your underſtanding, that while many of the inconveniences which are complained of, flowed from the dangerous parts of a firſt magiſtrate's prerogatives, and which require to be abridged, many others were the effect of that luſt of ruling which your miniſters have practiſed too long with impunity, and which, in a late melancholy inſtance, (which gives me pain to recollect human nature, in the moſt exalted ſituation, is not excluded from,) ſhewed that they, in the

plenitude

plenitude of power, which the practice of government, and not the conſtitution, has given them, ſet every thing at defiance, to ſituations ſo delectable to ambitious minds.

Your Majeſty, I hope, will excuſe me for touching upon ſo delicate an affair—a circumſtance in which the ſympathy of all good men were concerned for you, as a man feeling from the hand of Providence the deprivations our feeble natures are liable to; but it is from the leſſons of our misfortunes we are to learn experience, and from our afflictions that our natures become ſoftened, and give us a due ſenſe of the equality of ſublunary beings. He that could intentionally wound the feelings of any human creature who had been ſubject to ſuch a misfortune, muſt be worſe than a brute; but it is only by looking to the bottom of things of this ſerious nature that we can ſpeak with preciſion.

We will reduce the queſtion of the regency to this ſhort iſſue. Were the Judges of the conſtitution and law, the Lords, my Lords the Biſhops, the Houſe of Commons, decided in one way of thinking upon that great conſtitutional queſtion? Is there a leading principle in the conſtitution by which they

could have been directed? Clearly there is; was it regarded? Your Majeſty, I preſume, has attended ſufficiently ſince your happy reſtoration to the proceedings upon that buſineſs, to know the ſtrange diverſity of ſentiments of the time, originated not more from the firſt impreſſion made in the Houſe of Commons by the oppoſite opinions, declared by Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt, than from a diſregard to hereditary ſucceſſion. Was not their uſing the Great Seal, in the manner they did, acting in contempt of royal authority, treating the laws, conſtitution, and the validity of affixing that ſeal by virtue of the authority of a firſt magiſtrate, with the moſt ſhameful indignity, thereby giving a flagrant example to the nation, and to the world, that ariſtocratical influence rules every thing, and governs not by fixed laws, or principles, but by caprice or intereſt; which is as dangerous to you and to your family, as it is good and wholeſome to government.

What would have been the conſequence, if your amiable ſon, the Prince, had declared his right, with a determination to have ſupported it? which I have heard he was adviſed to do; but declined it with a moderation and judgment, which do the higheſt honour to his

his heart as well as to his underſtanding. A civil war, in crumbling the empire, might have left it without a Crown.

Under the influence of your ſenſibility, Sir, you may have thought yourſelf, on the firſt moment of your recovery, highly obliged to your friends; but I preſume your temperate moments of reflection muſt have convinced you, that it was their regard for place and dominion, at the expence of every thing ſacred, that produced thoſe warm expreſſions of loyalty; the ſincerity of which will be doubted by men of the world, even when the declaration is not a ſoleciſm in principle. The way to have ſerved your Majeſty, and to have given proof of their attachment to hereditary ſucceſſion, would have been to have ſupported that principle, and the peculiar privileges of magiſtracy as given by the conſtitution, and not to have mutilated them merely for the purpoſe of ſecuring to themſelves their places and emoluments at the reſtoration of your health, which was not to be preſumed: But, after giving a mortal wound to the conſtitution, and a convincing proof to the world of its inſtability and imperfections.

Frequent

Frequent profeſſions of friendſhip are always ſuſpicious; but when a man talks aloud, and openly avows it, depend upon it he has ſome ſelfiſh purpoſe to ſerve. It is from the actions of a man, and not from his words, that we are enabled to form a proper judgment of the rectitude of his heart.

I believe no man that ever firſt debauched innocence, and then left it to the miſeries of an afflicted boſom, to ſigh away its tender ſoul in the melancholy ſituation, which a baſe betrayer and deſerter had left it in, ever yet was to be depended upon. Intereſt and royal munificence may work miracles, but they ever muſt be of a kind that would diſgrace a profeſſed juggler.

Call upon Parliament as firſt magiſtrate, tell them the complaints of your people, and your own internal conviction, ſhews to you, in the ſtrongeſt light, the deluſion that you have ſo long groped in; tell them with a tone of magiſtracy, and in the dignified language of truth, how precarious will be the happineſs and proſperity of your affectionate ſubjects, the ſafety of your own Crown; but above all the glory and ſalvation of the Britiſh nation, if the ſame imperfect ſyſtem is not changed;

changed; prove to your people, and to the world, that your former government was wholly the conſequence of a bad education, and the wicked advice of unprincipled ſophiſts; that the happineſs and comforts of your induſtrious and generous people were always the firſt object of your heart, and that to atone for former errors, and raiſe a monument of glory to immortalize the wiſdom of a Britiſh Parliament; that it is your earneſt deſire that they will take into their moſt ſerious conſideration, the unequal repreſentation of your people; the oppreſſive loads of taxes, with which years of folly, and ruinous ambition have charged the neceſſaries of life, not more diſtreſſing to the honeſt laborious poor, than it is dangerous to the commercial intereſts of the nation, which is one of the firſt objects of parliamentary care, and upon which the rank of Great-Britain, amongſt other nations, muſt ever depend; tell them, that you are convinced, that until the conſtitution acquires ſtability, and a durable form, the welfare of this country is not in a more precarious ſituation than the exiſtence of monarchy; and that you are ready to aid, with all the powers with which a chief magiſtrate is inveſted, to amend and alter, in any ſhape, the conſtitution, to that order and

form, moſt likely to afford permanent ſecurity, general comfort, and felicity; that you are convinced for this end ſacrifices muſt be made, by the different branches of government, to the people, or rather that you muſt return them thoſe privileges which have been uſurped in times of confuſion and diſtreſs; that your moral duty and political intereſt call upon you, as firſt magiſtrate and protector of your faithful ſubjects, to make uſe of their confederated labours, in remedying theſe growing evils, which have taken deep root in the rank ſoil of corruption and contumelious pride; that a monſter is generating, which, if not ſmothered in embryo, will overturn every thing, that the induſtry of ages, the accumulated talents, genius, and wiſdom of our forefathers has produced, which is beautiful and elegant. Call their attention to the enormous national debt which clogs the wheels of induſtry, enhances the price of manufactured articles, and thereby ſuffers other nations, who have had the wiſdom to appropriate uſeleſs property to the diſcharge of national burthens, and who are profiting by the inventions of your ingenious people, to riſe to more ſplendour, and greater wealth and comfort; tell them they muſt be equally ſenſible with you, how much the proſperity of this

this country depends upon the encouragement given to its laborious inhabitants. That when their inventions become diſſeminated, and other countries profit by the labours of your ingenious artizans, with the advantage of that proportional cheapneſs of proviſions, which leſs charges upon the profits of induſtry will neceſſarily produce; it is then that rivalry will produce clamours and diſcontent in the workſhops, which will riſe into riots and rebellion in the ſtreets. Aſſure them, they have only to conſult information, which is undoubted, to know that great part of the moſt valuable inventions, inventions which have been the principal cauſe of the brilliancy of our commerce for years paſt, are already tranſported, and ſome time ſince in action both in America and France, though acts of parliament have been paſſed interdicting their removal; they proving the fallacy of that narrow ſyſtem of policy, which looks for general ſecurity and increaſing wealth any where but in the encouragement which is given to induſtry and trade, in the cheapneſs of the neceſſaries of life, in deſtroying monopolies, and in equallizing the privileges of commerce; tell them that it is from the encouragement given by the wiſdom and equity of Engliſh laws, that your loyal and generous

ſubjects, will ever riſe to that pre-eminence which has hitherto been their peculiar glory and boaſt. Join with your faithful, but oppreſſed people, in remonſtrating againſt the renewal of that hateful charter to the India Company, which has been productive of ſo many miſchiefs; and ſhew, by that analogy of reaſon, whih all men of ſenſe have adopted, that every ſpecies of monopoly is as detrimental to trade as it is an encroachment upon the privileges of citizenſhip. Tell them, that the voice of reaſon, the feelings of humanity, and the blaze of evidence, juſtly call upon their ſenſibility, policy, and dignity, as Britiſh legiſlators to interpoſe their wiſdom in behalf of the poor ſlaves in the Weſt-Indies *, who are

* Men's paſſions operate variouſly, and appear in different kinds of actions, according as they are more or leſs rectified and ſwayed by reaſon. When one hears of negroes, who, upon the death of their maſters, or upon changing their ſervice, hang themſelves upon the next tree, as it frequently happens in our American plantations, who can forbear admiring their fidelity, though it expreſſes itſelf in ſo dreadful a manner? What might not that ſavage greatneſs of ſoul which appears in theſe poor wretches, on many occaſions, be raiſed to, were it rightly civilized? and what colour of excuſe can there be for the contempt with which we treat this part of our ſpecies, that we ſhould not put them upon the common foot of humanity;

are treated with a cruelty which would ſhock the greateſt tyrant that ever diſgraced human nature, ſay, that your pride is wounded by the repreſentations of thoſe wanton depredations, which the Engliſh have been committing upon the rights and privileges of men in almoſt every part of the globe, and of which the general conſent and teſtimony of mankind evinces the truth, while they have been claiming the benefits of freedom themſelves. That if theſe evils cannot be entirely removed, you truſt, in their wiſdom, ſome regulations at leaſt might be made, which would alleviate the ſufferings of thoſe oppreſſed ſlaves, whoſe very name is an odium, as diſgraceful to Engliſhmen as it is diſhonourable to their inhuman tyrannic maſters.

Finally tell them, that imperfections, which had their origin in the inexperience of our glorious anceſtors, have grown into multiplied, extravagant, and dangerous abuſes; abuſes which call aloud for the collected wiſ-

that we ſhould not only ſet an inſignificant fine upon the man who murders them; nay, that we ſhould, as much as in us lies, cut them off from the proſpect of happineſs in another world as well as in this; and deny them that which we look upon as the proper means for attaining it.

SPECT. No. 215.

dom of the nation to remove them; delay may be ruinous; extraordinay caſes require vigor and boldeſs; there are periods in the affairs of government, when a timid prudence muſt always prove fatal.

The only fair way to judge of things is by compariſon. The ill-adviſed uſurpations of the unfortunate Charles, or the ambition of his favourite Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, was not more odious to the people of thoſe times, than the tyranny of many abuſes which now exiſt, are, to a large proportion of the people of the preſent day. You, Sir, have only to recollect, that thoſe "illuſtrious "ſtruggles which vindicated this empire from "hereditary ſervitude, recorded that valuable "doctrine, that *truſt abuſed was revocable*,"

Times have altered! The American revolution is over! Freedom is extending itſelf rapidly over Europe! Paine's book has been read with avidity by all orders of men in the three kingdoms!

It is not my intention to alarm your Majeſty's fears; far from it. Every good man muſt view, with ſecret dread and horror, the approaching criſis, when the proud diſtinction

of

of men muſt bend to that ſtate, which was coeval with the creation, if no timely remedy is applied to an unhealthy conſtitution.

I ſhall conclude this addreſs, with quoting a paſſage from one of Junius's letters, written almoſt two-and-twenty years ſince; and if it then was diſregarded by your Majeſty's miniſters, I flatter myſelf, you have too much prudence, and wiſdom, to diſregard it at the preſent day, after experience muſt have taught you, to reverence a name which is an ornament to human nature, and which has given a luſtre to truth and to the Engliſh language, equally calculated to arreſt our admiration, and ſecure our eſteem.

" What is the dignity of the Crown,
" though it were really maintained;—What
" is the honour of Parliament, ſuppoſing it
" could exiſt without any foundation of in-
" tegrity and juſtice?—Or, what is the vain
" reputation of firmneſs, even if the ſcheme
" of government were uniform and con-
" ſiſtent, compared with the heart-felt af-
" fections of the people, with the happi-
" neſs and ſecurity of the royal family, or
" even with the grateful acclamations of the
" populace! Whatever ſtile of contempt

" may

" may be adapted by Miniſters, or Parlia-
" ments, no man ſincerely deſpiſes the voice
" of the Engliſh nation. The Houſe of
" Commons are only interpreters, whoſe
" duty it is to convey the ſenſe of the people
" faithfully to the Crown. If the interpre-
" tation be falſe, or imperfect, the conſtitu-
" ent powers are called upon to deliver their
" own ſentiments. This ſpeech is rude, but
" intelligible; their geſtures fierce, but full
" of explanation. Perplexed by ſophiſtries,
" their honeſt eloquence riſes into action.
" Their firſt appeal was to the integrity of
" their repreſentatives; the ſecond to the
" King's juſtice; the laſt argument of the
" people, whenever they have recourſe to
" it, will carry more, perhaps, than perſua-
" ſion to Parliament, or ſupplication to the
" Throne."

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